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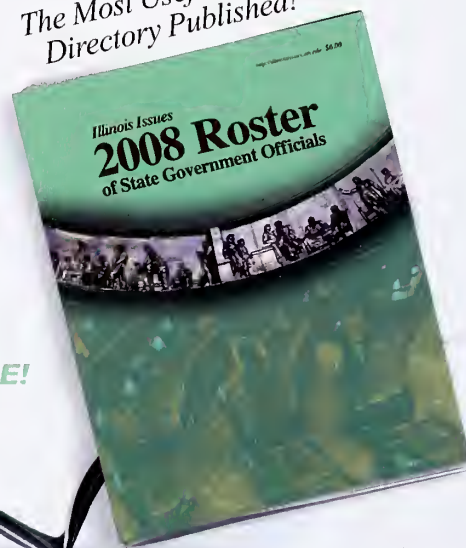
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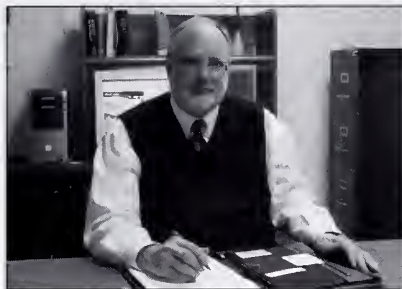
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Dana Heupel



Few places have more maps than the Illinois State Library

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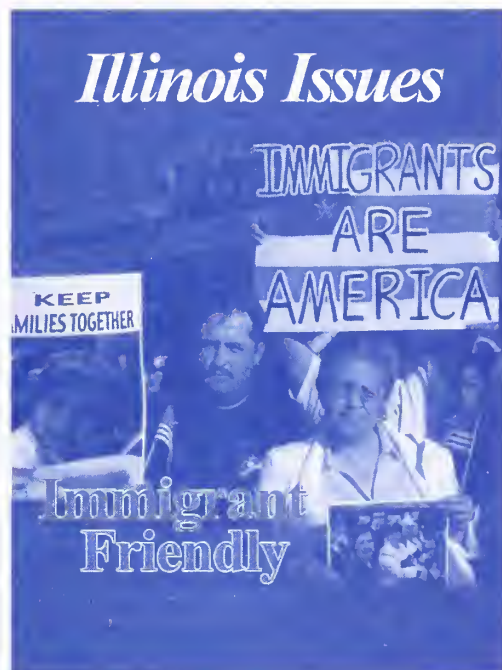
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library since 1972. She's the steward
of the vast collection.

"A lot of it has to do with Arlyn,"
says library Director Anne Craig. "She



Arlyn Booth and Tom Huber pore over the collection.

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Dana Heupel



Few places have more maps than the Illinois State Library

by Dana Heupel

Lost? Can't seem to find your way?

I know I often can't. The genetic strand that governs my sense of direction must be frayed. It seems I'm always heading right when I should go left. I've turned more U's than Vanna White.

That's why I've always been fascinated by maps. They're often the only way I can navigate from place to place. I devour 'em like cheap novels.

And I recently learned that few places have more maps than the Illinois State Library.

It is a designated regional federal and state depository, meaning it receives all the maps published by the U.S. and Illinois governments. Maps showing roads, taxing districts, census tracts, wetlands, topographic features, soil surveys, rivers, coal mines, legislative boundaries, even historical Indian villages. And much, much more — 186,000 maps in all.

Arlyn Booth, whose title is map coordinator, has worked at the state library since 1972. She's the steward of the vast collection.

"A lot of it has to do with Arlyn," says library Director Anne Craig. "She

Photographs by Stacie Lewis



Maps upon maps



Arlyn Booth and Tom Huber pore over the collection.

has, in her long career, really beat the bushes."

Booth says she looks for "any which way I can add to the collection. I beg a lot."

Retaining maps is well within the library's mission, Booth says, which is to gather research material for state government. "Maps are just one more form of information."

But state agencies aren't the only patrons interested in the library's maps. They also attract archaeologists, engineers, construction firms and genealogists, among others.

And the collection isn't limited to this state. "We do have more than Illinois here, by all means," she says. "We have worldwide coverage."

One patron, Booth says, often comes in before he travels to business conferences, so he can find nearby hiking trails. But "a lot of our questions have to do with history rather than the current stuff," she says.

In all, the library adds about 6,000 maps a year to its collection. It allocates about \$5,000 from its overall book acquisition budget for new maps "in good years," Booth says. She's quick to add, "That's not this year."

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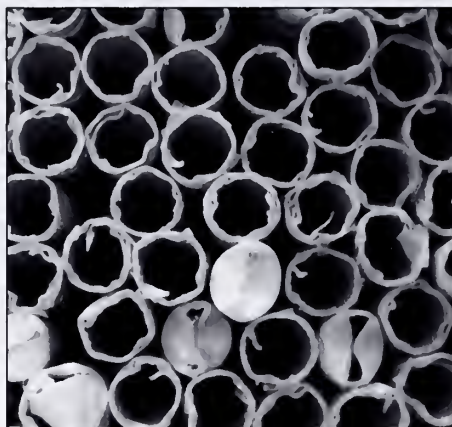
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Stored in tubes for safekeeping

A current project involves scanning old secretary of state Illinois highway maps into a digital format. The first state highway map was issued in 1917, says map librarian Tom Huber, who works with Booth in the library's map section. There are a couple of gaps, but the library has every state highway map issued since 1921.

The collection's oldest original map is of the United States and was published in 1845. In it, Missouri is the farthest western state. The remainder is shown as "Indian Territory."

Although old maps can be very valuable, Booth says: "We're not necessarily after the original artifacts. We're just after the information."

Copies — digital or otherwise — are fine. She adds that the library doesn't have the resources to appraise outside maps for value.

Booth joined the state facility soon after graduating from library school.

"I was working alongside all these other reference librarians who had subject specialties. One was a science specialty; one was a business specialist. I said, 'I feel like a class dummy around here,' to my boss at the time. ... She said, 'Well, we're getting a lot of map questions, and nobody on staff seems to know very much about the maps we have. How would you like to be the map person?' So I said, 'OK, boss.'"

"I don't have a geography degree, but I learned about the maps and the map library business."

After about eight years as map reference specialist, "I'd been

finding all these maps that needed preservation ... so I started cataloging them in our database and getting these preserved," she says.

A later stint as the library's head of reference didn't leave much time for map work, but Booth returned to the map section full time in 1984, when the library was designated as the combined federal and state depository for maps.

Aside from providing directions to or from somewhere, some of the maps, such as those dealing with the former German empire or places such as Hungary, can help genealogists follow trails of family migrations, Huber says.

"Anybody trying to take genealogy back to the Continent can come in."

In the near future, the library expects the National Parks Service to designate it as a repository for Route 66 maps and other information involving the storied highway.

"Arlyn's always collected Route 66 stuff," Huber says. "So when this came up, we kind of became a natural."

So add the Mother Road to the other road maps housed in the Illinois State Library. Those relating to genealogy to those relating to geology. From the mines down below to a huge collection of aerial photographs from above.

All of the maps are in a searchable database, along with the library's books and periodicals. All are available for public inspection, often for copying and sometimes for loan. The library also has the capability to translate paper maps into digital images.

Some of the library's information is available online at www.cyber-driveillinois.com/departments/library. The phone number for the map room is (217) 782-5823, and the e-mail address is islmap@ilsos.net.

If you want to try to navigate your way there the old-fashioned way, the Illinois State Library is at Second and Monroe streets in Springfield, right across from the Capitol.

East ... maybe. I'll have to check a map. □

Dana Heupel can be reached at heupel.dana@uis.edu.

Illinois Issues

A publication of the University of Illinois at Springfield

May 2008

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Credits: The issue was designed by Patty Sullivan. The photograph on our cover of Northerly Island, the peninsula that was once home to Meigs Field, comes to us courtesy of the Chicago Park District.

Editorial and business office: HRB 10, University of Illinois at Springfield, One University Plaza, Springfield, IL 62703-5407.

Telephone: 217-206-6084. Fax: 217-206-7257. E-mail: illinoisissues@uis.edu. E-mail editor: heupel.dana@uis.edu.

Subscription questions: Illinois Issues, Subscription Division, P.O. Box 2795, Springfield, IL 62708-2795 or call 1-800-508-0266.

Hours are 8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. Central Time, Monday-Friday (except holidays). **Subscriptions:** \$39.95 one year/ \$72 two years/ \$105 three years; student rate is \$20 a year. Individual copy is \$5. Back issue is \$5. *Illinois Issues* is indexed in the PAIS Bulletin and is available electronically on our home page: <http://illinoisissues.uis.edu>. *Illinois Issues* (ISSN 0738-9663) is published monthly, except July and August are combined. December is published online only. Periodical postage paid at Springfield, IL, and additional mailing offices.

Postmaster: Send address changes to *Illinois Issues*, Subscription Division, P.O. Box 19243, Springfield, IL 62794-9243.

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Illinois Issues is published by Center Publications
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Bethany Jaeger



The legislature and the governor continue to feud while taxpayers pay the court costs

by Bethany Jaeger

Gov. Rod Blagojevich repeatedly demonstrates that he'll do whatever it takes to expand health care to as many Illinoisans as possible. But because relationships between the governor and the legislators are "frosty," as House Minority Leader Tom Cross says, the governor is left with trying to force issues rather than negotiate them in the legislative process. As a result, taxpayers are footing some of the bill for court costs.

On one hand, the Blagojevich Administration has been on the defensive as outside entities file lawsuits against the governor's executive actions. For instance, court cases resulted when the governor tried to ban violent video game sales to minors, import European flu vaccine without federal approval and allow residents and state employees to import prescription drugs from other countries (see *Illinois Issues*, May 2007, page 10). Numerous state agencies paid more than \$670,000 to the private law firms of Chicago attorney Michael Kasper and Washington, D.C., law firm Zuckerman Spaeder LLP, according to the state comptroller's records.

More recently, the administration has been on the offensive, taking others to court. Last year, the governor sued House Speaker Michael Madigan and House Clerk Mark Mahoney for reasons rooted in the extended overtime session. Two state agencies and two executive officers are paying salaries ranging from \$80,000

It's too early to estimate the cost of the administration's suing the secretary of state, but it signifies an underlying problem costing taxpayers in a lot of ways.

to \$135,000 a year for four internal lawyers to work on the cases. Taxpayers also pay for the time spent by Madigan's legal counsel, who earns \$125,000 a year.

So it's not cheap, and it gets more expensive when the administration hires private law firms.

This year, the governor's director of the Illinois Department of Healthcare and Family Services sued Secretary of State Jesse White for not publishing administrative rules related to the governor's health care expansions. Until the secretary of state publishes those rules in the *Illinois Register*, the administration can't expand the programs.

The governor's health care agenda could define his administration — that is, if a string of federal investigations into his administration's hiring practices and political campaign fundraising efforts don't tarnish his legacy beyond repair.

Either way, one has to wonder about why his administration pays so many

internal and external lawyers to defend his agenda.

In the meantime, it's too early to estimate the cost of the administration's suing the secretary of state, but it signifies an underlying problem costing taxpayers in a lot of ways. The case only landed in court because the governor and the legislature couldn't negotiate.

White's office says the lawsuit is nothing personal.

"I don't think there's a hostile relationship there at all," says Dave Druker, White's spokesman, but he adds, "We've certainly had some differences with the governor over the years."

The two Chicago Democrats exchanged words in 2003, when Blagojevich inherited a \$5 billion budget deficit his first year in office. He proposed cutting nearly \$50 million from the secretary of state's office, which would have resulted in closed drivers' facilities and layoffs. The two worked it out that fall and compared it to a family spat.

This year, White's office refused to publish Blagojevich's administrative rules that would have expanded state-sponsored health insurance to more middle-income families.

The governor originally had tried but failed to advance that plan through the legislative process, where it became tangled in a complicated web of political feuds. So Blagojevich tried using his executive powers and submitted the plan

to the legislative panel that reviews such programs.

The Joint Committee on Administrative Rules rejected the expansions, leading the governor to proclaim that the panel doesn't have binding authority and can't exercise power over the executive branch.

The secretary of state, on the other hand, believes his office lacks authority to publish administrative rules until they receive JCAR approval. Acting on the advice of his attorney, White refused to publish them.

Given the disagreement about the authority of JCAR, the Department of Healthcare and Family Services director, Barry Maram, filed a complaint in Sangamon County Circuit Court.

"Both parties in this case recognize that the lawsuit is part of a process intended to clarify the laws surrounding health care expansions and JCAR's constitutional standing," wrote Ruth Igoe, department spokeswoman, in an e-mail. "We consider this an amicable process."

While it's no surprise the governor sued White because his agency publishes the rules in question, Druker says the case highlights different interpretations of state law. "Our belief is that we could not accept the rules unless JCAR approved. Seems to be a fundamental difference."

The Illinois attorney general's office is representing White. The legal team has until May 2 to respond in writing to the administration's lawsuit.

While the governor's office and the secretary of state's office agree to let the courts decide, legislators are preparing back-up plans if the rule-reviewing committee ceases to exist. House Speaker Michael Madigan now attaches extra paragraphs to each piece of legislation that would require the governor and his agency directors to submit rules for implementing programs to the General Assembly for approval. Currently, the legislature can approve the rough outlines of the governor's new programs and let the administration fill in the details later through JCAR.

In a letter to legislators last month, Madigan described the lawsuit against the secretary of state as an "explicit statement that [Blagojevich] does not want executive agencies to work in a cooperative manner with the legislature. This is a stark departure from the past practices of this

The courts, in fact, could bounce the authority question back to the Capitol for the governor and the legislators to reconcile.

and previous governors. It's important that legislators recognize the implications."

That includes allowing the administration to enforce health care expansions or other programs without checks and balances.

Rep. Gary Hannig, deputy majority leader from Litchfield, notes the governor's inconsistency. During his first term, Blagojevich signed legislation strengthening JCAR's authority.

"He certainly didn't seem to have a philosophical problem with this agency at that time," Hannig says. "It only seems that when this agency didn't rubber stamp his proposals that he suddenly decided that maybe they weren't constitutional and that maybe we ought to take them to court."

Lawmakers of both political parties repeatedly have said they don't oppose the governor's expansion of health care, but they do oppose the governor's method of advancing his agenda through executive powers rather than through the legislative process.

The governor's office declined to return repeated phone calls.

While it's too early to tally legal fees for the case against White, the cost most likely will come out of the Department of Healthcare and Family Services' budget.

Igoe says the department can't project the court costs, but she cites recent studies showing that the lack of health insurance contributes to deaths of Illinoisans and constitutes a crisis. "Clearly, if it's a crisis for people in this state, the governor wants to make it a priority for his administration. And he has done so and continues to do so through the health care expansions."

The administration started to expand a Medicaid program to 147,000 middle-income adults, but a court order last month halted the expansion as a result of a lawsuit filed by Richard Caro, a Riverside attorney.

Caro filed a complaint in Cook County proclaiming the governor's expansion of the state's FamilyCare program was unconstitutional because it would cost \$43 million in the first year without legislative approval.

"I filed a lawsuit to try to stop the expenditure until they get the legislative authorization," Caro says. "It's that simple."

His case was combined with another filed in Sangamon County by Republican businessman Ron Gidwitz and Greg Baise, president and chief executive officer of the Illinois Manufacturers' Association, on behalf of the Illinois Coalition for Jobs, Growth, and Prosperity.

Judge James Epstein ruled that the administration lacks authority to move the FamilyCare program into a state Medicaid program because it fails to meet federal requirements. The administration is prohibited from expanding FamilyCare until a full trial decides or until the department changes or cancels the expansions. His ruling also said that Caro's complaint likely would succeed in a full trial.

The governor's office issued a statement that said it would address the federal requirements and continue to expand the FamilyCare program.

Caro says he believes in universal health care, but he opposes the governor's methods.

"If I'm wrong, so be it," he says. "I just want it resolved and for the people who govern this state, the executive and the legislature, to resolve the issue."

The courts, in fact, could bounce the authority question back to the Capitol for the governor and the legislators to reconcile.

Hannig, deputy majority leader in the House, says the lawsuits seem like a frivolous way to solve problems and put the judicial branch in an awkward position, having to take sides between the executive and legislative branches. "The judges are saying, 'Why are you dragging us into this thing? Can't you guys just work it out?'"

He says it's the legislature's responsibility to ensure that the chief executive doesn't misconstrue the intent of state law.

Until the governor and the legislature settle the checks-and-balances questions, taxpayers will foot the bill. □

Bethany Jaeger can be reached at capitolbureau@aol.com.

BRIEFLY

PLAY BALL

State considers buying Wrigley Field

Photograph courtesy of Okrent Associates

The chances appear slim that the state will purchase Wrigley Field to renovate the Chicago Cubs' home stadium. Yet Illinois has used state funds to financially support professional sports teams before, and the role of a popular former governor could play a part in the fate of the deal.

The General Assembly must approve the purchase, and there appears to be shaky support for diverting taxpayer funds while the state faces a \$750 million deficit this fiscal year.

Renovations to the 94-year-old park could cost upwards of \$300 million, according to some estimates. The Illinois Sports Facilities Authority, which already owns and operates U.S. Cellular Field, where the Chicago White Sox play, would buy the landmark stadium from the Tribune Co.

The Illinois House's point man on the state budget says the deal isn't going to be well-received in the legislature.

"I think you have to construct a plan that wouldn't cost any revenues, and I'm not sure how you can do that," says Rep. Gary Hannig, a Litchfield Democrat.

Hannig says the stadium deal distracts from the state's financial problems. The state is in danger of not making aid payments to schools and has a growing list of doctors owed Medicaid payments.

The debate could gain traction, however, because of the man in charge of the deal.

Former Republican Gov. James Thompson chairs the sports authority, and



Wrigley Field

he kept the Chicago White Sox in the city in 1988 with a deal to use taxpayer money to fund the team's new stadium.

Tribune owner Sam Zell, who will sell both the team and the stadium this year, brought the idea to Gov. Rod Blagojevich.

While the area generates large tax revenues through bars, restaurants and high property values, the deal would freeze those revenues at 2008 levels and divert any new money to a separate fund for ballpark renovations.

The plan closely resembles Chicago's tax increment financing plan to divert property tax revenues from schools and roads to be used on special projects. Because the city recently increased property tax rates, however, using property tax revenue to renovate the stadium would likely spark controversy.

The proposal also calls for bonds to be issued to help pay for the renovation, with the team's owner paying to rent the stadium from the sports authority. Zell also suggests selling naming rights to the ballpark as a revenue source.

Hannig says if the purchase succeeds, it will be because of Thompson's legendary ability to make deals. "Gov. Thompson is a very persuasive gentleman. If anyone can do it, he can do it."

But Hannig points out that the situation differs from when Thompson found taxpayer money for the White Sox's park 20 years ago because the Cubs aren't threatening to leave Chicago. "I think everyone looks at the Cubs and Wrigley Field and says, 'They're not going anywhere.'"

Patrick O'Brien

LEGISLATIVE CHECKLIST

By state law, the Illinois General Assembly is supposed to approve a state budget for the next fiscal year by May 31, but lawmakers anticipate another overtime session. They're considering controversial funding sources for a statewide capital plan and Gov. Rod Blagojevich's desired health care expansions. In the meantime, legislators continue to advance bills that affect state operations and Illinois citizens' everyday lives.

Legislation can be searched by bill number at <http://www.ilga.gov/>.



Education revamp

HB 4232 The Illinois State Board of Education would be revamped and newly appointed by the governor under a measure sponsored by Rep. Lou Lang, a Skokie Democrat and frequent critic of the Blagojevich Administration. But the governor would have to choose from a select pool of candidates vetted by a panel of state lawmakers. The House approved the measure. It's now in the Senate.



Foreclosure assistance

SB 1979 Homeowners trying to avoid losing their homes could receive grants under a measure approved by the Senate. Sponsored by Chicago Democratic Sen. Rickey Hendon, it would give grants to lenders if they agreed to freeze the foreclosure process and negotiate with the homeowners. It now goes to the House.



Overdue bills

HB 5898 The governor's annual budget proposal would have to include the amount of overdue bills and would require Illinois to pay bills within a month of being submitted. Sponsored by Rep. Bob Flider, a Mount Zion Democrat, and approved by the House 101-3, the measure also would increase the interest rate if the state took more than 60 days to pay the bills. It's now in the Senate.



Progressive income tax

HJRC A 42 High-income Illinoisans would be taxed double the rate of the rest of state taxpayers under a proposal by Rep. Michael Smith, a Canton Democrat,

who says the intent is to ease the burden on the middle class. New tax revenue would help fund a state capital plan and public school system, as well as allow tax breaks for the middle class. Even if approved by the House and Senate, Illinois voters would have to approve the change to the state Constitution.



Campus violence

SB 1881 Bail would be denied to individuals who made threats of large-scale violence, as was the case last year at Southern Illinois University Edwardsville. Under a measure approved by a Senate committee, the proposal would slow down the legal process so threats of campus violence could be investigated properly, says Sen. William Haine, the Alton Democrat and measure sponsor.



Smoking exemptions

The Senate advanced two measures to relax the state smoking ban.

SB 2006 would allow smoking in designated rooms of veterans' homes if the residents agreed.

SB 2707 would exempt riverboats for five years or until a neighboring state enacted a smoking ban.

Other attempts have stalled in the House.



Follow the money

HB 4765 Illinois taxpayers would have a one-stop shop to find out how their public dollars were spent under a measure unanimously approved by the House. Rep. Michael Tryon, a Crystal Lake Republican, sponsored the measure to improve government transparency by creating a Web site that would track all money spent on such matters as legislative initiatives, state contracts, state employees and tax credits.



Early education

HB 5038 The state would dedicate more money to education programs aimed at children age 0 to 3 under a measure approved by the House (see *Illinois Issues*, April, page 6). It now goes to the Senate.

HB 4705 The House also unanimously

approved an extension of Blagojevich's first-term Preschool for All program, which first funds state-sponsored preschool for children from low-income neighborhoods who are considered at risk of academic failure. The extension, by only two years, would allow the state to provide available funding to children from middle-income families, as planned when the governor unveiled the program.



Identity protection

SB 2113 State and local agencies would be banned from using Social Security numbers in ways that could expose individuals to identity theft under a measure sponsored by Sen. Christine Radogno, a Lemont Republican.

For instance, the agencies could not print an individual's Social Security number on any card required to access services. Nor could they require individuals to send their Social Security numbers over the Internet without a secure connection or use their Social Security numbers to log into Web sites without a step ensuring the site is authentic. The measure also would require each government agency to develop a plan.



Child predators

SB 2382 A proposal to protect children from Internet sex offenders passed the Senate and goes to the House. Sponsored by Sen. John Millner, a Carol Stream Republican, the measure creates the offense of knowingly using the Internet to seduce or solicit a child — or a person believed to be a child — to commit any sex offense. It also establishes that a crime is committed when the person travels any distance to meet the minor.



Amendatory veto

HJRC A 35 The governor would lose his power to rewrite or alter legislation under a proposal by Rep. John Fritchey, a Chicago Democrat. The proposed constitutional amendment would require a three-fifths majority in each chamber, and a majority of voters would have to approve it in November. Five other states allow amendatory vetoes, according to Stateline.org.

More checklist**Ethics reform**

HB 824 Senate Democrats advanced a proposal to ban so-called pay-to-play politics, or trading campaign donations for state contracts. Like a House version that received unanimous support last year, the measure would prohibit businesses from donating to political campaigns of officeholders whose offices grant the contracts or to candidates seeking that office. It also includes stronger disclosure requirements for contractors.

**Immigrant crime**

HB 5756 The names of undocumented immigrants arrested for crimes would be forwarded to federal immigration author-

ities under a proposal by Carol Stream Republican Rep. Harry Ramey Jr. The measure would require the jail or prison holding the person to alert immigration authorities and the U.S. Department of Homeland Security when the person was admitted and when the person was released. The measure currently is in the House.

**Health expansions**

Senate Republicans proposed a series of reforms to Medicaid and the state's other health care programs.

SB 2463 would require legislative approval of all health care expansions, a direct response to the governor's attempts to expand health care without legislative approval.

SB 2468, sponsored by Sen. Carole Pankau, a Roselle Republican, would

change the governor's All Kids health insurance program to require citizenship.

SB 2464, a separate measure sponsored by Pankau, would require current pay stubs to prove Medicaid eligibility.

All measures are being held in the Senate.

**Red light cameras**

HB 5288 Up to nine more counties would be allowed to operate red light cameras to electronically enforce traffic laws under a measure sponsored by Rep. Charles Jefferson, a Rockford Democrat. In addition to Cook and some surrounding counties, those that would be able to send tickets in the mail after a traffic violation include Sangamon, Champaign and Peoria counties.

Patrick O'Brien

ENVIRONMENT**Federal smog limits tightened to address global warming**

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has put in place stricter air quality standards to reduce smog. Emissions from engines and industries mainly contribute to smog, and scientific research has found that ozone, the gas formed from smog, affects people's health and the climate.

The new EPA policy stems partially from a lawsuit brought by 12 states, including Illinois. The U.S. Supreme Court ruled against the EPA, concluding that greenhouse gases such as smog contribute to global climate change and cause illness and death. They are pollutants that endanger the public health or welfare under the Clean Air Act.

Sharron LaFollette, professor and chair of the Department of Public Health at the University of Illinois at Springfield, says that the elderly, children and others who suffer from respiratory conditions, such as asthma, bronchitis and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, are particularly sensitive to the effects of smog.

The EPA is lowering acceptable ozone levels to 0.075 parts per million, down

from 0.084 parts per million, and calculates the reduction will result in fewer premature deaths. Some critics point out the need for even tougher regulations, while others contend the new requirements will further burden counties classified by the EPA as "non-attainment" under the 1997 limits. The EPA anticipates that, in the short term, 345 counties across the nation — a fourfold increase — will fail to meet the new standard. Since 1997, 39 Illinois counties, including Cook, have reached the 0.084 ppm goal. Those successes may be reversed under the new limits.

The EPA is also cutting locomotive emissions. New diesel standards that affect trains, boats and trucks are designed to cut 90 percent of current soot and particle materials by 2030.

"EPA is fitting another important piece into the clean diesel puzzle by cleaning emissions from our trains and boats," said EPA Administrator Stephen Johnson in a printed statement.

In Illinois, trains run on more than 7,300 miles of track, according to the Illinois Commerce Commission. Amtrak spokesman Marc Magliari says Amtrak has been ahead of schedule on making sure its remanufactured diesel locomotive engines meet EPA's 2007 "Tier II" emissions reduction rules. He

says the company is committed to a 6 percent reduction in its greenhouse gas footprint over a seven-year period by limiting locomotive idling and using new ignition technologies. Magliari points out that Amtrak operates all-electric locomotives on its Northeast Corridor and Keystone Corridor routes. In Illinois, Amtrak still uses diesel-powered engines.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture opposed the EPA's initial proposal for the secondary, or public welfare, standard of 0.075 ppm, claiming it would unduly burden agriculture, especially the biofuel and ethanol industries. Secondary standards address smog's long-term effects on the environment, including forest, wildlife, cropland, vegetation and other ecosystems.

"Public welfare standards place limits on ozone that have more impact on rural areas," says Leslie Duram, professor and chair of the Department of Geography and Environmental Resources at Southern Illinois University Carbondale.

"The truth is that these standards are needed to protect all Americans — our well-being, our economy and our environment — well into the future."

Tony Hamelin

AGRICULTURE

Higher levels of CO₂ mean more bugs and fewer soybeans

A new University of Illinois study finds that high levels of atmospheric carbon dioxide increase a soybean plant's sugar content and decrease its chemical defense system, which attracts such leaf-eating insects as the Japanese beetle.

The process of photosynthesis — a plant's ability to turn sunlight into carbohydrates for energy — occurs more rapidly when subjected to higher levels of carbon dioxide. And some agricultural experts consider that a good thing because soybeans grow faster.

However, the carbohydrates — sugars — are a feeding stimulant for adult Japanese beetles, says Evan DeLucia, biology professor and department head at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. He is an author of the study, which is available online in the *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, with UIUC entomology professor and department head May Berenbaum.

One "startling" discovery, DeLucia says, is that the Japanese beetles not only eat the sweet leaves more quickly, they live longer. "They have more breeding events, so they produce more offspring." But that discovery did not apply to beetles feeding on soybeans outside the control plot fumigated with high levels of carbon dioxide.

The researchers then looked at the plant's defenses against insects. Soybeans and other plants produce a hormone, jasmonic acid, when insects begin to nibble on leaves. That triggers a chain of chemical reactions to ward off the attack. The end chemical is an enzyme called a protease inhibitor, which when ingested, impairs an insect's ability to digest the leaves.

"What we discovered is that leaves grown under high CO₂ lose their ability to produce jasmonic acid, the defense pathway is shut down and leaves are left with little defense," says DeLucia.

The current level of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere is about 380 parts per million, he says. That is an increase of 100 parts per million since the beginning of the Industrial Revolution. Predic-



Soybean plant defenses go down as CO₂ levels go up, UIUC researchers found.

tions set the level of CO₂ in the atmosphere at 550 parts per million by 2050 — or sooner with the accelerated rate of industrialization in China and India.

The next step, says DeLucia, is to test other plants, both cultivated and native, to see if high CO₂ levels are shutting down their defense systems, too.

"Even if it is just soybeans, it's bad enough," he says. Soybean production, combined with value-added products, is an \$18 billion industry in Illinois, according to the Illinois Soybean Association. Marketing director Mark Albertson says so far he is hearing from farmers that their No. 1 yield robber is still the soybean cyst nematode, a parasite that attacks the plant's roots. The Japanese beetle is down the list of pests.

"This [data] certainly throws another wrinkle in the whole cloth of what we might expect from global climate change," says DeLucia, "in that the relationship between plants and insects is being fundamentally altered."

Beverley Scobell

Civil unions on hold

Two Illinois lawmakers want to allow same-sex couples the power to make end-of-life decisions, visit their loved ones in the hospital and make funeral arrangements just as married couples can do in this state. But the political will to tackle such a polarizing issue may be lacking during an election year.

By extending such civil rights to gay couples through civil unions, the legislation is designed to avoid forcing churches to marry same-sex couples.

Sen. David Koehler, the Peoria Democrat sponsoring the measure in his chamber, says the issue is about equity, not gay marriage. "There are groups that need to have rights extended to them where marriage is not available right now."

His measure failed in a Senate committee, however.

Similar legislation also is stalled in the House as Democratic Rep. Gregory Harris of Chicago tries to round up the votes needed. "We're not going to bring it to the floor until I think it's going to pass," he says.

Harris adds that Illinois is one of the first states to address the issue without a court order telling the government to do so. Courts in New Jersey, Massachusetts and California ordered states to make some form of legal union available for same-sex couples.

Illinois banned same-sex marriage in 1996, but opposition groups continue to pursue an amendment to the state Constitution defining marriage as only

between a man and a woman, says David Smith, executive director of the conservative Illinois Family Institute.

Smith says the majority of Illinois voters, including some Democrats, would oppose the measure recognizing civil unions because it interferes with a church's right to operate as it sees fit.

"It boils down to gay rights versus religious freedom," he says.

Koehler, an ordained minister, says the debate should be framed in terms of rights, not beliefs. "This shouldn't be a referendum on whether we like gay people or not."

The House defeated a measure to give benefits to same-sex couples who receive a Chicago teacher's pension.

Patrick O'Brien

BRIEFLY

PRESERVATION

Group names 10 endangered sites, with Wrigley added

Aside from the politics swirling around the future of the Chicago Cubs, their home field has one more advantage. Preservationists have joined the discussion. The Landmarks Preservation Council of Illinois added Wrigley Field as a "Special 11th Designation" to its annual list of the 10 most endangered properties in the state.

"[Chicago Cubs owner] Sam Zell and the Illinois Sports Facilities Authority keep talking about how the field has to be economically viable and that the landmark designation has to be relaxed, and that means to me that they are going to do something really awful," says David Bahlman, president of the council.

The nation's second-oldest active baseball park was designed for a Federal League team in 1914. The National League Cubs started playing there in 1916, and from 1921 to 1970, Wrigley was also home to the Chicago Bears.

Other Chicago-area structures on the endangered list include the Adams Memorial Library in Wheaton, the Chicago Daily News Building, the Germania Club and Theatre, the Gunners' Mates School and the Michigan Avenue streetwall.

Downstate structures in need of protection are Ursuline Academy in Springfield, Assembly Hall in Champaign, Spoon River Bridge in Bernadotte, The Mill in Lincoln and Burlingame House in Eden, a Randolph County refuge for escaped slaves along the Underground Railroad.

Of those, The Mill may be the most vulnerable. "A good straight-line wind, and it's gone," says Geoff Ladd, executive director of Abraham Lincoln Tourism Bureau of Logan County and chairman of the Route 66 Heritage Foundation, the group working to save the 1929 restaurant.

"It needs a fast influx of funds to get it stabilized and start restoring it," says Bahlman. The Mill, he says, is an important piece of early automobile architecture.

Beverley Scobell

Photograph courtesy of the Landmarks Preservation Council of Illinois



Chicago Daily News building.

Photograph by Robert Shymonski, courtesy of the Landmarks Preservation Council of Illinois



Germania Club and Theatre, Chicago

Photograph by Skidmore, Owings and Merrill, courtesy of the Landmarks Preservation Council of Illinois



Gunners' Mates School, North Chicago

Photograph by Robert Tholl, courtesy of the Landmarks Preservation Council of Illinois



Michigan Avenue streetwall, Chicago

Photograph courtesy of the Landmarks Preservation Council of Illinois



Adams Memorial Library, Wheaton

Photograph courtesy of the Landmarks Preservation Council of Illinois



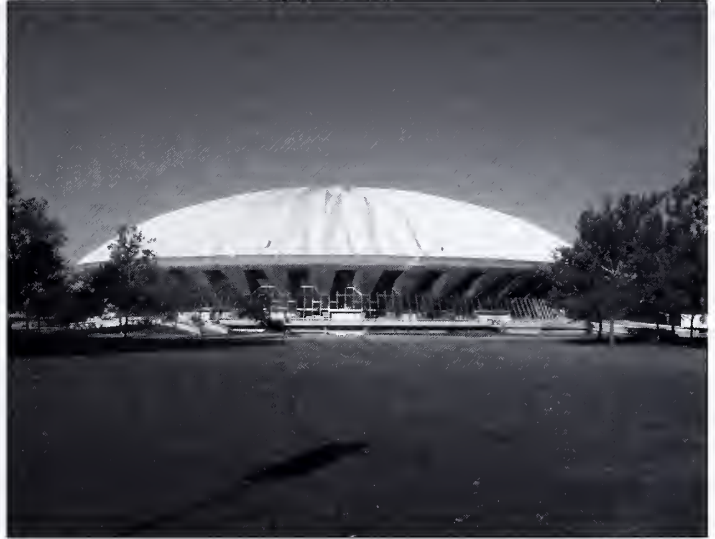
The Mill on Route 66, Lincoln

Photograph courtesy of the Landmarks Preservation Council of Illinois



Ursuline Academy, Springfield

Photograph courtesy of the Landmarks Preservation Council of Illinois



Assembly Hall, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Photograph courtesy of the Landmarks Preservation Council of Illinois



Spoon River Bridge, Bernadotte

Photograph courtesy of Arthur Insurance & Realty Services



Burlingame House, Eden

EDUCATION

Higher graduation rates translate into big bucks for state

Had the 2007 class of more than 42,000 Illinois high school dropouts graduated, their lifetime earnings would have increased by more than \$11 billion. That is just one of the statistics the Alliance for Excellent Education, a Washington, D.C.-based advocacy group, wants policymakers to consider. The rewards of an education system that succeeds in getting students from freshman year through senior year can be measured in dollars.

Two bills working their way through the legislature aim to help students finish high school by expanding charter schools. **SB 1956**, sponsored by Sen. Kimberly Lightford, a Democrat from Chicago, and Rep. Jerry Mitchell, a Republican from Sterling, seeks to add five new multisite charter schools to the Chicago Public Schools system that would enroll only students who have dropped out of school and need specialized help in meeting requirements to re-enroll in their high schools and graduate. **SB 2402**, sponsored by Sen. Iris Martinez, Democrat of Chicago, allows for 100 charter schools statewide, up from 60, and removes geographical limits. Currently, Chicago has a state-set cap of 30 charter schools, and the suburbs and downstate divide the other 30 in half.

"I think this is an answer to a problem that has been with us a

long time," says Mitchell, a member of the governor's task force on dropouts and a former school superintendent.

No one argues there is a problem. In the Chicago school system, the third-largest in the nation, almost half of the students drop out, and of those who graduate, more than one-third leave school with no more than a D+ average, according to a report released last July by the Consortium on Chicago School Research at the University of Chicago.

"A number of the charter high schools in Chicago show very high graduation rates, given the students that they serve — or better-than-expected graduation rates — compared to schools that serve students with similar background characteristics," says Elaine Allensworth, an author of the study.

The report finds that a "second chance" or "skimming off" strategy does little for students at risk for failure. "This makes sense if there are a few students at risk, but it is a questionable solution in typical schools where half the students eventually go off track and fail to graduate."

Mitchell answers critics, among them teachers' unions, that other approaches tried so far have not worked. "Now we have a quarter million kids on the streets, so we need to cut down that population, and if we can do that and break the cycle, then maybe the Chicago Public Schools will have a chance to do a better job."

Beverley Scobell

Hollywood is making more movies in the Land of Lincoln

From *Batman* to *ER* to the *Ernie Banks Story*, Illinois is increasingly popular with producers of feature films, TV programs and documentaries. Citing a sevenfold increase, the Illinois Film Office reports 2007 was the best year on record for bringing in money from films made in Illinois, a total of \$155 million from sources ranging from hotels and restaurants to electricians and accountants.

"It touches so many sectors, including wages," says Betsy Steinberg, managing director of the Illinois Film Office, a division of the state Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity.

She points to passage of the Illinois Film Tax Credit in 2003 as the reason movie-related jobs — more than 26,500 hires last year — have come to the state. Before the credit was established, the film industry passed the state by, she says, with revenue falling to an all-time low of \$23 million in 2003.

"In 2006, the credit was changed to be a 20 percent transferable tax credit," says Steinberg. "It was not enacted until halfway through 2006, so 2007 was the first full year we were able to reap the benefits."

She adds that 2008 is already shaping up to be another good year. Johnny Depp is working on a movie in Chicago about John Dillinger, and Matt Damon will be in Decatur working on a movie about a corporate mole who helps uncover a price-fixing scheme. Other projects are also in production.

The Illinois General Assembly renewed the credit last month.

Beverley Scobell

Rare book library reopens at U of I

Following a 10-week, \$800,000 spring cleaning, the Rare Book & Manuscript Library within the main library at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign reopens May 5 (see *Illinois Issues*, March, page 10). Library officials closed the section housing the rare collection on February 25 after finding visible mold on more than 15,000 books. A Texas-based company was contracted to clean the books and the heating and air conditioning system.

The U of I Board of Trustees approved an additional \$3 million in March to replace outdated heating, ventilation and air conditioning systems, attributed as the cause for the mold spore growth and the subsequent costly cleanup.

"We rely on the people on the ground to assess what needs to be done," says Lawrence Eppley, chairman of the board. "They came back to us with this recommendation, and we're happy to get it going."

None of the 300,000 items in the collection, valued at more than \$1 billion, were damaged "beyond repair," says Tom Teper, associate dean of libraries. The collection includes copies of Shakespeare's first four folio editions, more than 100 17th-century editions of Milton, more than 2,300 volumes of science history that date to the beginning of the university as a land-grant institution and first editions of such authors as Charles Dickens and Mark Twain.

Teper says the librarians have had some discussions with the administration about whether this is the time to move the valuable collection to a secure, environmentally appropriate building of its own. Eppley says that type of request has not yet reached the board, that it usually has to "percolate on campus a bit." He adds that the university has a system to prioritize capital needs and that some projects have been on the list for some time.

"Every dollar is scarce," he says.

Beverley Scobell

Rural counties seek to expand mass transit

Twenty-eight of Illinois' 102 counties are undergoing massive coordination efforts in an attempt to obtain federal funding for transportation services in rural areas.

That's up from eight counties last year, according to Edward Heflin, manager of the state's Rural Transit Assistance Center at Western Illinois University in Macomb. But it's also only about half of the 40 counties that initiated contact with Heflin's agency. Those local groups haven't yet taken the necessary steps to coordinate transportation and human services.

As part of a federal transportation initiative, Heflin's agency guides communities through a step-by-step process for developing transit systems tailored to their needs. The goal is to broaden the availability of public transit, reduce duplicate services and reshape mass transit as a social service (see *Illinois Issues*, November 2007, page 16).

Despite the increased interest in the federal grants, 24 counties in downstate Illinois still lack any countywide public transportation. LaSalle County in north central Illinois, the state's second-largest county by square miles, is one.

While smaller transportation systems exist in Ottawa and LaSalle-Peru, a local group wants to better connect the rural and urban areas throughout the county. Currently, a senior citizen or person with disabilities can't get a ride from an Illinois Department of Human Services office in Ottawa to the Social Security Administration office in Peru, says Jim Monterastelli, chief executive officer of Horizon House of Illinois Valley Inc., a Peru-based agency that

provides services to people with developmental disabilities.

Finishing the so-called primer process would allow the county to get an increase of \$8,000 a year until it collected \$301,000 in fiscal year 2010, according to Heflin. The program is designed to cover 80 percent of administrative costs and up to half of the operating deficit of a countywide system, while state and local resources pick up the rest.

"We're pulling our resources together, looking to where we're duplicating and trying to reduce the duplication," Monterastelli says. "Once we do that, then we'll be able to apply for the different funds."

The process takes at least a year and requires numerous local agencies to work together and commit resources.

A common problem is that local officials assume the coordination process only requires "a meeting or two and the money comes flowing down the road," Heflin says. "And it's not that. It's actually a process that if the county worked hard, it's about an 18-month process."

Some counties have taken as long as two years just for the first of five phases.

But the primer process is worth the work, Heflin says, because it helps prevent inefficient or disconnected systems, which can include one bus driving seniors and one bus driving people with disabilities, even though they stop at the same places.

The federal funding sought is separate from last year's move by the Illinois General Assembly to increase state funds to help downstate transit systems pay operating costs.

Bethany Jaeger

HIGHER ED Student exodus tied to underfunding

Illinois is the second largest exporter of college students in the nation. Only New Jersey ranks higher in student emigrants. A study conducted last year by researchers at Illinois State University's Center for the Study of Education Policy concluded that Illinois lost 66,000 potential students from 1992-2002, with most going to universities in Wisconsin, Indiana and Iowa. Also, the data show that most of those students never move back to Illinois after graduation, and those who do don't stay long.

Migrant students surveyed equated quality with prestige and responded that the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign was the only "prestige" public university in Illinois.

State Rep. Mike Bost, Republican of Murphysboro, says that lack of perceived quality of Illinois' universities stems from the "lack of vision and apathy of state leadership, including the governor, towards investing in Illinois higher education that has left public campuses increasingly underfunded, which has affected perceived brand quality of higher education in the state."

The trend in underfunding Illinois' public universities has put increased fiscal burdens on students and campus administrators to make up the shortfall. In 1998, 30 percent of the the University of Illinois' budget came from state funds. In fiscal year 2008, state funds made up just 18.6 percent of the U of I budget.

Illinois state Sen. Edward Maloney, a Chicago Democrat and chair of the Higher Education Committee, says underfunding and mounting deferred maintenance costs on Illinois campuses contribute to issues of out-migration, college affordability, student retention and graduation rates.

"As college tuition and fees continue to rise, more students don't graduate," he says. "Those who do forgo teaching and other high-need public service careers due to higher student loan debts."

At Southern Illinois University, the cost of backlogged facilities maintenance is "estimated between \$400 million to \$500 million," says Brad Dillard, facilities director at Southern Illinois University Carbondale. SIUC spokesman Rod Sievers says the university's Board of Trustees had to implement a facilities maintenance fee upon each of its 21,000

Carbondale campus students, or \$144 per academic year, to help cover the costs of infrastructure repairs and replacements.

"SIU is also about to issue \$100 million in new bonds toward a 10-year plan to reduce its deferred maintenance backlog, replace roofs and rebuild basic infrastructure on the Carbondale campus," says Sievers.

The ISU researchers recommended increased funding for state universities, higher financial aid awards, better high school recruitment strategies and creating high-quality niche degree programs on each campus to reverse the migration and retention trends.

The study also found that as the education market competes for students' dollars, students' expectation of future earnings as a return on their educational investment plays an important role in the university selection process. If Illinois students' perceptions of the value of an Illinois college degree persist, the researchers forecast a brain drain that likely will translate to a highly educated and skilled workforce shortage, lost business productivity and less tax revenue.

Tony Hamelin

The greening of Chicago

How Mayor Richard Daley plowed ahead with Earth-friendly measures

by Mike Ramsey

A mere generation ago, Chicago was known as a colorful but smoggy, water-polluting metropolis. Now, Nelson Algren's gritty "City on the Make" is home to the most rooftop garden space in the nation. It's a place that encourages the owners of homes and buildings to go green.

The Land of the Wild Onion no longer smells like one and is taking new steps to curb carbon emissions. The former Hog Butcher for the World is often ranked among America's most environmentally friendly cities. Last fall, Chicago hosted a national convention on sustainable construction techniques, giving Mayor Richard M. Daley — who has been dogged by unrelated scandals in recent years — some positive publicity and another chance to tout his city's innovations.

"By pursuing green strategies ... you can save money and you can make Chicago a more attractive place to come and visit," says Sadhu Johnston, Daley's recently installed chief environmental officer, who coordinates green efforts

across city departments. "[Daley] got those issues in a way that really no other mayor had gotten. In the past five years, it's really exciting to see so many other mayors following his lead and doing this across the country."

What put Chicago near the forefront of topics such as global warming — and took the city one step further away from its unseemly Al Capone heritage? Many agree that a simple, if slightly controversial, tree-planting initiative sowed the seeds for the transformation nearly 20 years ago.

parts of the city, but not everyone was impressed. Critics said Daley — who had been elected to serve the last two years of the late Mayor Harold Washington's term — was pursuing superficial improvements rather than tackling serious problems as he angled for a 1991 re-election bid.

"He had to do something quickly to try to show leadership, and the best way to do that was to try to do highly visible projects like tree plantings," says Bob Crawford, a veteran City Hall reporter who is now retired. "There were jokes

Soon after he took office in 1989, Daley began scrutinizing the "granular details" of neighborhoods while he was driven to and from public appearances, his first press secretary, Avis LaVelle, recalls. She says the note-taking mayor was put off by treeless areas of the city.

"He really liked the tree-lined boulevards," LaVelle says. "He'd make it a point to say, 'Look at how different it looks.'"

The Democrat's fledgling administration created a program to reforest

Photograph courtesy of the City of Chicago — Department of Environment



The green rooftop Chicago City Hall

going around that he was Chicago's Johnny Appleseed."

Daley's emergence as a green enthusiast is surprising to some, given that the staccato-voiced former state senator and prosecutor grew up in working-class Bridgeport on the city's south side as the son of legendary Mayor Richard J. Daley. The elder Daley, after all, is remembered for the aggressive buildup of highways, skyscrapers and airports and asking, "What trees do they plant?" as a rhetorical put-down of critics who questioned his leadership.

Still, "Hizzoner" appreciated his lakefront vacation home in Grand Beach, Mich., and suggested to incredulous reporters in the early 1970s that the polluted Chicago River could one day rebound and become a fish habitat. It has.

"[It's] the old Irish mentality of no matter how wealthy you are, you want to work the farm, you want to go fish in the

stream," says Roosevelt University political scientist Paul Green, who is writing a biography of the first Mayor Daley. "I would think [the son] is obviously much more dedicated to it. Times have changed."

That's not to say the younger, more progressive Daley, now in his history-making sixth term at age 66, is a tree-hugger. Former aides agree the mayor appreciates trees for their aesthetics and air-scrubbing qualities but that he employed them as infrastructure in a broader, coordinated urban-renewal strategy that also valued components such as accessible parking and attractive facades.

"He clearly had a sense of the importance of the quality of life, in making cities livable, competitive places," says a former top aide, Bill Abolt, now Chicago office manager for Shaw Environmental Inc.

Daley, who was re-elected last year with 71 percent of the vote, was not available for an interview for this article, his press office indicated.

The mayor's earliest environmental priorities were getting control of rampant "fly dumping" of trash in distressed wards and formulating cleanup plans for abandoned underground storage tanks and shuttered industrial sites, says former city attorney Henry Henderson, who became Daley's first environmental commissioner when a new department was created in 1992. He says the agency began as an enforcement arm at a time when "cities were written out of the environmental equation" and the department's successful crackdowns in the early years made loftier green goals possible.

"When [Daley] was in the Constitutional Convention in 1970, he introduced the plank for increased home-rule

Photograph courtesy of the U.S. Conference of Mayors



Mayor Richard M. Daley

Photograph courtesy of the City of Chicago — Department of Environment



The City Hall garden

It's not entirely clear when environmental concerns became so infused in city operations during the second Daley's reign.

authority in the state of Illinois," says Henderson, now Midwest office director for the Natural Resources Defense Council. "He understands local government as the first line of defense."

Today, all city departments are expected to advance the environmental cause. The Chicago Department of Transportation, for example, has built 25 permeable "green alleys" since 2006 that help absorb storm water. The Chicago Department of Planning and Development, which is overseeing an ambitious reclamation of Lake Calumet wetlands, tries to entice developers to use sustainable construction methods in exchange for faster permit approval. The city's Department of Fleet Management division is retrofitting Chicago's diesel vehicles with filters to reduce emissions, and their engines are not allowed to idle for more than five minutes. (But clean-air

advocates caution that the city, as a whole, which includes the presence of private coal-burning power plants, still has room for improvement.)

It's not entirely clear when environmental concerns became so infused in city operations during the second Daley's reign. Some credit growing public awareness and more stringent state and federal regulations with putting green on the front burner in Chicago. Others say the mayor regularly emphasized the topic by design and even spurred experiments, such as the European-style landscaped medians that now decorate 90 miles of city streets. He got the idea while visiting Paris in the mid-1990s.

"Part of it was organic, but part of it was definitely intention," Suzanne Malec-McKenna, Daley's environment commissioner, says of the green emphasis. "We have institutionalized environment."

Chicago LEEDs the way in greenest buildings

Chicago's bragging rights on environmental initiatives include this distinction: It is home to four buildings or spaces rated at the highest level of green construction standards — the most of any U.S. city.

The local projects, which include the Chicago Center for Green Technology and the Loop offices of Exelon Corp., all attained "platinum" certification under the voluntary system known as Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design, which is managed by the U.S. Green Building Council.

Independent LEED auditors evaluate different types of construction projects, from new buildings to rehabs of existing structures to office-suite conversions. Among the factors that drive a project's certification level are its energy efficiency and use of recycled material.

The city-owned Chicago Center for Green Technology at 545 N. Sacramento Boulevard — a site that was once an eyesore exemplifying urban blight — is now a showcase example of LEED ideals.

The rubble-recycling company that previously owned the land allowed mountains of debris to pile up. After seizing the property in 1995, the city spent \$9 million to clear the grounds and

redevelop an office building there that had been constructed in 1952.

Forty percent of the construction materials used in the redevelopment came from recycled products. The building's pristine-looking ceiling tiles are made from old newspapers, while some of the flooring is made from tires. Stall partitions in the restrooms were once milk jugs and soda bottles. Meanwhile, the two-story structure also boasts a green and insulating roof, solar panels and rain-catching cisterns that divert water to the property's vegetation, rather than storm sewers.

LEED platinum certification also was awarded locally to Exelon's consolidated office space (220,000 square feet) at Chase Tower, the Center for Neighborhood Technology's renovated headquarters in a former industrial building in Wicker Park and Christy Webber Landscapes, a neighbor of the Chicago Center for Green Technology.

More broadly, Chicago has 210 projects that have either been LEED-certified or "registered" (seeking LEED certification) — more than any other U.S. city, according to the Chicago Department of Planning and Development.

The boom is partly attributed to the city's own construction of LEED-certified

buildings, including libraries and other public structures. Also stimulating the trend is a "green permit" program that offers private developers expedited regulatory approval for sustainable construction techniques, such as rooftop gardens.

"With developers, what are the two big things? Time and money," says Suzanne Malec-McKenna, who heads the city's Department of Environment. "If you build green, you go to the front of the line. You're given a team of people from the Department of Buildings to help you with it, and we'll waive a good portion of your fees."

Undertaking the expense of LEED certification makes good business sense, says Doug Widener, executive director of the U.S. Green Building Council's Chicago office. He says the construction techniques lead to significant energy cost-savings and are attractive to tenants.

In fact, individuals in the development industry think "if you're not building a LEED building, you're building an obsolete building," Widener says.

For more information about the U.S. Green Building Council, the LEED system and a nationwide inventory of projects, go to www.usgbc.org.

Mike Ramsey



Humboldt lagoon

In a 1997 trip to Hamburg, Germany, Daley admired that city's rooftop gardens and suggested Chicago City Hall as a tryout site for one of them back home. Sure enough, when it was finished in 2001, the elaborate \$1.5 million, 21,000-square-foot green roof demonstrably cooled the municipal building in the summer, cut energy costs and helped retain rainwater. Today, the city offers grants to businesses and homeowners who follow suit, and Chicago leads the nation with 4.5 million square feet of green roof space completed or in the works.

"You lead by example and then you build incentive programs," says Johnston, Daley's environmental guru, who recently chaired a "climate action" panel studying ways to reduce Chicago's greenhouse gases by 80 percent in the next 40 years. Incentives will play a key role in the local effort to help offset global warming, he says.

Not everything has gone smoothly. The city government has found it challenging to meet its current obligations in reducing greenhouse gases as a voluntary member of the Chicago Climate Exchange, Malec-McKenna says. And the city was a few months late in meeting its own voluntary

2006 deadline to acquire 20 percent of its power from renewable sources, Johnston says.

If Chicago has an obvious Achilles heel regarding the environment, it's that the city lacks a comprehensive recycling program. A plan to expand a seven-ward pilot program for the separate collection of recyclables was scaled back this year because of budget constraints, even though the "blue cart" initiative for homes served by city garbage crews has been particularly successful on the northwest side, where about 25 percent of the trash is being recycled.

All residents on city garbage routes can put their recyclables in blue bags, which are supposed to be separated from regular trash at sorting centers. But some environmental advocates suspect the bulk of recyclables are still being buried in landfills. Meanwhile, they say, the owners of large apartment complexes and commercial buildings, who hire private haulers, aren't being held accountable under a city law that requires recycling.

"The fact that Chicago does not have an effective recycling program is a black eye on the city of Chicago's claim that it's the greenest city," says Julie Dick,

president of the Chicago Recycling Coalition. "It's such a fundamental thing to be able to recycle. It's one of the few environmental areas that everyone can participate in."

City officials say several factors, including the layered garbage-collection system and varying degrees of receptiveness across the neighborhoods, have stymied Chicago's recycling efforts. Malec-McKenna says the city's ordinance is due for a rewrite. She hopes that "blue cart" will be offered for smaller residences in all 50 wards within five years.

"'Blue bag' could have worked, but I think that the jury decided, and it just kind of nailed the coffin shut," she says. "What is the easiest way to get people to recycle? There's not one answer when you have 77 different [neighborhoods]."

But the Daley administration's environmental successes outweigh the failures, most environmentalists agree. The policies have done more than cleanse the city, too — they've helped scrub Daley's recently tarnished reputation.

Potential mayoral adversaries smelled blood when federal prosecutors brought hiring-fraud charges against former Daley staffers in 2005. That came on top of a "Hired Truck" bribery scandal that led to Abolt's resignation as city budget director after Daley held him accountable for failing to adequately monitor the program. Also bruising were alleged attacks by off-duty police officers on civilians in barroom settings — assaults that splashed over the media as Daley tried to step up city efforts to land the 2016 Summer Olympics.

Green, the Roosevelt University professor, says he thinks Daley's environmental preaching from the bully pulpit is sincere, as evinced by the amount of budget muscle the mayor has put into green initiatives.

Daley can indeed influence big changes when he wants, Crawford, the retired reporter, says.

"I start off by giving Daley credit for the good things that he's done," Crawford says. "Then my point is, if he can do that much good for the city, then why is it that he couldn't give us honest government as well?" □

Mike Ramsey is a Chicago writer who has covered state government and politics.

Arterial obstruction

The challenge of designing and funding a statewide capital plan gets harder with a slowing economy and an increasingly frustrated public

by Bethany Jaeger

McHenry County drivers can sit in waves of traffic that stretch nearly two miles to cross the Fox River in Algonquin. The bridge at Illinois Route 62 intersects with Route 31, creating daily traffic congestion.

"We're approaching 40,000 vehicles a day," says Algonquin's village president, John Schmitt. "It's just an astronomical amount, and when you have it on a traffic light, it just doubles the amount of time that it takes to get through there."

The county northwest of Chicago is booming in population along with neighboring counties. It is outgrowing the infrastructure and the limited number of bridges over the river.

McHenry County officials agree that part of a solution is to create a bypass around the Algonquin intersection. Nearby Kane County also plans to build two new bridges as another part of the regional approach.

But Kane and McHenry county officials have been fighting for state funding since the 1990s. They're still lobbying at the Statehouse this spring, competing with a growing list of infrastructure needs across the state. The longer the region waits, the more expensive the work gets. The state originally committed \$24 million to the Algonquin bypass, but the unfunded portion of the project now reaches \$70 million, according to the Illinois Department of Transportation.

The fight has come full circle for former U.S. House Speaker J. Dennis

Hastert. In 1990, he formed a task force to study Kane County traffic solutions. Nearly two decades later, he's been recruited by Gov. Rod Blagojevich, as has Southern Illinois University President Glenn Poshard, a former state legislator and congressman, to help lobby for a major capital plan that would fund the very projects Hastert's task force helped create.

Hastert and the state's congressional delegation sent repeated letters to state lawmakers imploring them to break a political stalemate that's choked a capital plan. Without an agreement, Illinois risks losing more than \$9 billion in federal funds earmarked for highway and transit projects across the state.

The federal money will still probably be there, but there's no guarantee, says Mike Daly, spokesman for U.S. Sen. Richard Durbin of Springfield. And delaying a state match to those federal funds means more bad things could happen. "There are more variables brought into play that could work against us. I don't want to overstate this. It isn't that, 'If you don't pass a capital bill this year, the money will not be there.' But it's puzzling to us as to why we would want to gamble like that."

The political stalemate in Springfield collides with an election year and a slowing economy. The timing also affects state government's ability to sell capital bonds, repay the debt and win voters' confidence that new state spending is justified when Illinoisans already feel

pinched by more expensive gas prices and groceries.

Nationwide, infrastructure funding is bad enough for the U.S. Government Accountability Office to place the federal transportation financing system on its so-called "high risk" list. The report designates inefficient or unsustainable government programs that could fail and drain billions of dollars in the process.

The National Chamber Foundation of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce predicts the shortfall — the amount spent versus the amount needed to maintain and improve the system — will exceed \$1 trillion by 2015.

Illinois' transportation financing system got a poor review of its own in a comparison report by the Pew Center on the States. The state earned a "C" grade for infrastructure planning. Capital planning and maintenance were listed as "weaknesses."

The state transportation department says the absence of a capital plan has delayed countless projects.

"While diligent work on planning these projects has been performed, the funding is simply not there to complete many of them," department spokesman Brian Williamsen said in an e-mail. "It is our opinion that the passage of a capital bill would have made a significant positive impact on these ratings."

A capital plan also would allow the department to "halt the cycle of capital



Traffic often backs up over a Fox River bridge that ends at a congested intersection in downtown Algonquin, located in McHenry County.

deficiencies” and allow more than just maintenance projects to be done.

When the department proposed a five-year plan to improve the state highway system through fiscal year 2013, half of the projects, worth \$3.8 billion, would maintain the existing system. Nearly a quarter of them would repair or build bridges, and an additional 20 percent would help ease congestion.

Even more projects are listed in the plan as “unfunded,” which means they’re waiting for the state to enact a new capital plan to match federal and local funds already committed. For instance, a Chicago project to improve traffic and safety on Central Avenue would build a new crossing at the rail yards. Currently in the engineering stages, the rest of the project is estimated to cost more than \$350 million. That doesn’t include the cost of environmental cleanup, according to Williamsen.

In southwestern Illinois, the governor formed an agreement with Missouri’s Gov. Matt Blunt to build a new Mississippi River bridge, including a new connection to the existing interstate interchange.

Photograph by Randy Carson



Traffic congestion comes from all sides in downtown Algonquin, where state Route 31 intersects with a Fox River bridge on state Route 62. County officials hope for state funds to help build a bypass around the downtown area.

Ironing out differences hasn't been a strength of the current leaders, even though they are all Chicago Democrats. The strained relationships, particularly between Madigan and Blagojevich, create a bottleneck for a capital plan.

Blagojevich agreed to contribute \$313 million in state funds, but \$49 million depends on a new capital bill.

Blagojevich has proposed a program called Illinois Works, a \$25 billion plan for roads, bridges, schools, airports and mass transit. The administration says it would support 700,000 jobs and stimulate the economy. Through a series of controversial revenue ideas, including the sale or lease of state assets, the state would contribute \$11 billion. It would borrow \$3.8 billion.

That's about \$1 billion less than legislators agreed to borrow nine years ago for the state's last major capital plan.

Then-Gov. George Ryan created Illinois FIRST as part of his first budget. It relied on \$4.8 billion in bonding and was a five-year, \$12 billion plan largely paid for by increased vehicle registration fees and liquor taxes (see *Illinois Issues*, November 1999, page 8).

The economy and the political makeup of the General Assembly, however, were much different then. Ryan's capital budget benefited from higher-than-expected revenues, the opposite of what Blagojevich faces this year. Ryan, a Republican, also sat down and worked out differences between the GOP-majority Senate and the Democrat-controlled House, which still is led by Speaker Michael Madigan.

Ironing out differences hasn't been a strength of the current leaders, even

though they are all Chicago Democrats. The strained relationships, particularly between Madigan and Blagojevich, create a bottleneck for a capital plan.

People whose jobs depend on the construction industry pay the price. Bill Grams, executive director of the Illinois Road and Transportation Builders Association based in Itasca in DuPage County, says just like infrastructure, asphalt programs go dormant, start to decay and dry up without a constant level of funding.

Previously, when construction was slow, he says asphalt companies would supplement with private sector work, building parking lots, sewer systems or water systems in new neighborhoods. But the housing slump wiped the private sector jobs off the books, too.

"Those days are gone," he says. "They can't keep that company going when they still have outflow because every month, they have to pay the bank for the heavy equipment that they have."

When his members are out of work, it's hard to find a silver lining.

"My members have unemployed workers, and yet, 70 percent of the money that would get them going working again is sitting in Washington because the Illinois General Assembly can't come up with a viable capital program," Grams says. "That's a travesty."

So far, the state has used just 5 percent of the \$9.3 billion in federal funds

Alternate routes

Federal studies advocate such traditional revenue sources as gasoline taxes, vehicle taxes, tolls, transit fares and public parking fees because they're directly related and solely dedicated to transportation.

On the other hand, the revenue from those so-called user fees fails to keep pace with inflation and the cost of capital needs.

As Congress continues to draw down the federal Highway Trust Fund at a fast pace, states take on a larger share of the cost of capital projects. As a result, they're trying numerous alternatives to fund various transportation needs.

A federal pilot program is allowing participating states to collect tolls on

interstate highways as a way to pay for construction projects, according to the Denver-based National Conference of State Legislatures in its May 2006 report, "Surface Transportation Funding Options for States."

Many states are experimenting with ways to contract with private construction and design firms to build highways and tollways. Georgia lawmakers considered a truck-only toll lane, according to the report. The number of states using bond proceeds to pay for construction projects also is increasing, but so is the cost of retiring the bonds. The amounts also have to be repaid with interest.

Oregon is trying something entirely different, taxing drivers for the number

of miles driven instead of the amount of gasoline purchased. A pilot program started in spring 2006 and ended a year later. Participating vehicles used global positioning systems to track miles driven in state and out of state, and drivers paid the "user fee" instead of a gas tax.

The mileage tax would evenly apply to cars regardless of fuel efficiency, and it wouldn't be linked to inflation. Opponents fear privacy breaches and lost incentives to buy fuel-efficient vehicles.

The Oregon Department of Transportation reported in November 2007 that the mileage-based tax test run proved feasible as an alternative to the gas tax to fund roadwork. Oregon's lawmakers are expected to consider model legislation next year.

earmarked for hundreds of road, rail and transit projects approved five years ago, according to a letter signed by Illinois' congressional delegation and sent to state lawmakers in late March.

Jim Farrell, executive director of the Illinois Chamber of Commerce's Infrastructure Council, says without a capital plan in Illinois, states that are competing for the same federal dollars will move ahead. The funds are "earmarked under the condition that we're ready to use them," he says.

The added challenge for the state is that a tight economy makes it harder to justify paying for debt.

"It's not just the threat of an economic recession which is putting a crimp on the state authorizing new debt and addressing its infrastructure needs," says John Kenward, senior bond analyst in the Chicago office of Standard & Poor's, an independent bond rating agency. "Even on a good year, you're only going to make so much money. And you only have so much to spare for debt.

"So unless you have some quantum leap in revenue raising — because you're not going to get a quantum leap in the economy — you're looking at limited resources to pay for growing infrastructure needs."

The revenue ideas suggested at the state level so far, however, are controversial and are expected to draw out the legislative session into the summer.

The governor proposes leasing 80 percent of the Illinois Lottery to collect an estimated \$7 billion. No state has actually sold its lottery, although a handful are considering the idea. Blagojevich proposed a full-scale sale last year, but the plan stalled amid numerous questions about the long-term effect of selling a state asset designed to generate money for public education.

Beverly Bunch, associate professor in the Department of Public Administration in the Center for State Policy and Leadership at the University of Illinois at Springfield, says selling any state asset deserves caution because it uses a one-time revenue source for a long-term obligation. It also brings in a lot of money up front but prevents the state from collecting Lottery revenue over time. A bond issue, similarly, brings in a



Repeated storms this past winter created potholes like this one in Glen Ellyn.

lot of money quickly but requires the state to continue to repay the debt with interest.

"In both cases, the end result is a bunch of money now and less money in the future," Bunch says.

One alternative would be to change the state income tax to a graduated rate, as opposed to the state's existing flat rate applied to all income levels. But the governor has repeatedly vowed to reject any plan that would increase state income or sales taxes, and legislators are unlikely to vote for a tax increase during an election year.

"Once you take taxes off the table, then people get in boxes and get creative," Bunch says.

That's led legislators of both parties to propose an expansion of gambling. The state potentially could garner more than \$1 billion a year by allowing new casinos or riverboats to open, and existing gaming facilities could expand. One proposal also would allow slot machines at racetracks.

A complex mix of gaming and political interests often bogs down negotiations in Springfield, particularly as discussions focus on ways to divvy up the new casino revenues.

The Metropolitan Planning Council, a group of business and civic leaders in Chicago, sent a letter to Hastert and

Poshard to say the business community and the public will not tolerate more "inadequate, piecemeal" efforts to maintain the state's infrastructure.

The group advocates increasing so-called user fees or taxes related to transportation, including license-plate fees and gas taxes.

Winning the public's trust and support of any revenue idea, however, could be the biggest challenge.

Residents in Cicero just west of Chicago are skeptical of new government spending, says Dan Proft, the town's spokesman. And that's despite having to veer around "potholes that swallow up a car" in the highly congested areas of Roosevelt Road and Cicero Avenue.

Cicero collects about \$220,000 in motor fuel tax revenues, but that's far less than the \$2.4 million minimum estimated to be needed for repaving and maintaining heavily trafficked routes this fiscal year.

Cook County drivers already pay some of the nation's highest gasoline prices, according to AAA, with multiple layers of taxation. County residents also pay among the nation's highest sales tax in Chicago at a rate of 10.25 percent. And anyone living in a municipality that gets water from Lake Michigan is paying 15 percent more this year.

"It's fees and fees and fees upon tax increases and tax increases, and frankly, we're a working-class community," Proft says. "We're a community that's got a large senior population that lives on fixed incomes, largely. So no, the problem is that we cannot go back and extract any more blood from this town."

Others, including Grams of the Illinois Road and Transportation Builders Association, are more optimistic about the public's willingness to pitch in if it means fewer vehicle realignments and flat tires.

"We're in a competitive world and can't continue to fund these things on higher casino taxes and what I think a lot of people feel are gimmicks," he says. "You have to go to the public, and I think that's the issue we're seeing right now. People are saying, 'Tell us what it costs, and if we think it's worth it, we'll pay for it.'" □

Q&A Question & Answer

Aaron Jaffe

He serves as chairman of the Illinois Gaming Board, a five-member panel appointed by the governor that regulates and collects taxes from the state's gaming facilities. The panel has been busy trying to put the state's 10th casino license up for sale. It could become busier if the General Assembly and Gov. Rod Blagojevich approve legislation to build new riverboats or casinos as a way to help finance a statewide infrastructure program.

Jaffe says he doesn't have any personal interest in gaming and says it's a "crazy industry." Appointed by Blagojevich, Jaffe came out of retirement in California to run a board that had only two members at the time.

He served in the Illinois House from 1971 to 1985, before the state legalized gambling in 1991. He then served on the Cook County bench. He also taught at University of Loyola Law School.

Illinois Issues Statehouse Bureau Chief Bethany Jaeger spoke with the judge in late March about gaming as a revenue source for the State of Illinois.

Following Jaffe's remarks is an interview with Patricia Byrnes, an associate professor and research associate for the Center for State Policy and Leadership at the University of Illinois at Springfield. Jaeger spoke in late March to Byrnes about gambling as a revenue source for the state's infrastructure plans.

Here are excerpted versions of those conversations.

Q. What should the public know about the Illinois Gaming Board's task to help the state make money but also protect its citizens?

Our primary purpose is to regulate. The casinos cannot operate if we do not have a presence there. So we have to be on board. We have an audit department, a legal department, an enforcement department, an investigative department, a financial analysis department and an operational



Aaron Jaffe

department to ensure the integrity of gaming in Illinois.

We have oversight of the casino operations and of the licensing of the riverboats. When I say we do licensing, we not only license the operators but we license everybody that works within the casino. And we carry on an investigation on an ongoing basis because they have to keep up their licenses, but we regulate about 10,000 licenses from employees alone.

I've been there for three years, and I've learned a great deal. And I'm still learning. It's a crazy industry. We conduct criminal investigations. We do financial investigations. Nobody that wants to work for the boats or nobody who is in ownership of boats can have felony or criminal records. We do very extensive review of personal and financial backgrounds, and we also have to make sure that they pay their taxes on a daily basis.

Q. Why is Illinois limited to 10 gaming licenses by law?

The whole way that they started gambling in Illinois is sort of off-the-wall. First of all, our statute is based on Iowa's gaming statute, and it really isn't fit for Illinois. There's just so many things wrong on it, I could talk about it for three hours. But they put in at that time that there shall be 10 licenses, period. The question always pops into my mind: Chicago

doesn't have a boat, but there are two in Joliet. It doesn't make any sense to me.

Q. What do Illinois residents need to consider when deciding whether gambling generates a reliable revenue source for state services?

It produces a lot of money. While it produces a lot of money, it seems to me that really nobody understands that industry. I think people look at that industry and say, "OK, how can we get money from 'em?" And that's basically the only thought, but there's a lot of stuff that goes into it.

For instance, our tax rate is the highest in the country. And the casinos are always complaining about the fact that our taxes are the highest in the country. And they're always telling our staff, "We should go to Indiana, or we should go to Iowa or to Wisconsin or other places for our casinos because we do not have the restrictions that we have in Illinois." They get very nervous about what the legislature is going to do to them from year to year.

Q. But is it a reliable source of revenue for a state capital plan?

It has been, although, the last couple of months have been slower, and I think it's because of the economy, quite truthfully. The casinos will tell you it's because of the smoking ban and things like that. I don't totally buy that.

Q. One legislative proposal would allow slot machines at racetracks. How would that affect the rest of the industry and state revenue?

I don't know how they would really be regulated. Under some of the bills that I've seen, it becomes quite unclear. And I just fear for that. I really do, because I think slots at the tracks, basically what you're doing is you're saying, "This is another gambling establishment." And I don't know if the prerequisites are going to be

the same. I don't know who's going to police them. I don't know why we should just put slots at a track without having people investigate the people at the track.

Q. Recent legislation also has tried to distance the Illinois Gaming Board from the administration. What's your reaction?

If you look at that legislation, it's sort of laughable. You have to go through three different boards to pick someone. What's going to make those boards so great? I don't really know. The point of it is that you need people on the board that the public will have trust in. Quite truthfully, the prior legislation that I've seen, it would take them a year and a half to put a board into place. They have to go through all these things and quite truthfully, I was somewhat taken aback when they put that stuff in. I thought we were the reform board.

When I came aboard, I said that the entire gaming board, the statute for the gaming board, should actually be changed. Because I do not believe we should be within the Department of Revenue. It's not that they're terrible people or anything, but you get caught up in this terrible process.



Patricia Byrnes

Q. What percentage of casino and riverboat profits does the state actually make? How does that compare with what Illinois could collect by increasing the state income tax rate?

It's a very, very small portion. If you look at just general revenue funds, the personal income tax is almost 32 percent. The corporate income tax is 5 percent. And riverboat gambling taxes and fees are 2.5 percent. It was about \$689 million in



Patricia Byrnes

2006. But it's a very small portion. It's not going to fix a major budget problem or be the only source of revenue for capital improvement projects. But it could be one source.

Lotteries [are] about the same amount, \$670 million in 2006.

Q. Did you say gaming could only serve as part of a revenue-generating idea?

Yes. I'm a real believer that Illinois needs to do serious tax reform. There's many parts of the Illinois tax system that are outdated based on changes in the economy. Just moving from a manufacturing to more of a service-type of economy makes the sales tax very outdated, since we don't tax a lot of services under the sales tax. So we see dwindling revenue from the sales tax. We see decreases in revenue from the corporate income tax because of the loopholes and the ability of corporations to move their money around so they don't pay the corporate income tax. And we have not changed the income tax in a long time.

So if we're talking about long-term, how to fix any budget woes or structural deficit problems, then I think we really need to do tax reform. And gaming is an easy way for the politicians not to do that and still raise revenues.

Q. Some lawmakers advocate gaming as the solution to funding a capital plan. Is that inaccurate?

I don't think that that's clear. I think that it will generate revenue and could fund something like infrastructure issues and education. I think it could do that. Is it a panacea for the whole Illinois Works program? I don't think so.

The governor estimates in his budget address that if we increase the gaming tax rates and do a 10th casino license, it's going to bring in about \$300 million, versus the [\$11 billion] of the Illinois Works expected need.

Q. If the state were to approve a new gaming license, there would be a delay in the time it takes for the state to actually collect revenue, correct?

Yes, and how much they would actually get for the license. The state has the license sale, and then they tax the riverboat gambling in two ways: They have an admissions tax, which is about \$4 or \$5 per person, and then they tax the wagering. They do that on the gross receipts of the casino, and they do that on a sliding scale, which is similar to what Indiana does and some of the other states.

Q. How should members of the public weigh the positives and negatives of a casino in their towns?

Let's take an extra license in East St. Louis or Chicago. That is going to increase jobs, increase spending on infrastructure in those areas to have a casino. If people are going to Indiana or St. Louis to gamble, or even Wisconsin — there's a huge increase in the Indian casinos in Wisconsin — then it's keeping the money in Illinois. If Illinoisans are going to gamble, let's have them gamble on our state. That's one pro that they can consider.

But there is evidence that it does increase crime rates. The problem of gambling addiction is a concern, and there is cost of having a casino. You have to regulate them. □



Virtual degrees

Students have more options to take online classes at public universities, physically and financially reshaping college campuses

by Patrick O'Brien

Thousands of miles away in Guatemala, a 62-year-old college student learns math from instructors at the University of Illinois at Springfield.

For several years, the increasing number of students taking online classes at for-profit schools has invited questions about the quality of education received through the Internet. But as public universities face mounting costs, they also are entering the mix, changing the way students and professors think about the classroom.

The implications could be great.

Renato Sanchez, the student in Guatemala who's earning his second bachelor's degree through UIS, says the math courses are a lot like face-to-face classes, something he didn't expect.

"I thought I was going to be able to study at my own pace, and I found out that the program is very structured with a lot of deadlines to meet," he said in an e-mail.

Sanchez represents the typical student earning an online degree. He already has a bachelor's degree in engineering, works full time and needs a program that doesn't restrict his activities.

"The best part is that I can continue to study, and I have the ability to get material and turn in homework from anywhere I happen to be," he said.

Traditional universities are trying to capitalize on the demand for online classes to capture the booming number of students who probably wouldn't attend otherwise. Students who take online classes don't occupy classroom space, live in campus dorms or take up parking

spaces. Yet, they pay the same tuition as students who do, and they usually pay additional fees specific to online courses.

In the past five years, statewide enrollment in online classes more than tripled, according to the Illinois Virtual Campus, a group at the University of Illinois that tracks distance-education trends. The group recorded more than 145,000 online class enrollments in Illinois last year, and public schools account for about half of online enrollments in the state.

The way state schools approach online learning contrasts with methods used by for-profit universities. Yet, both are accredited and certified through the same review procedures by the Higher Learning Commission, a division of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools.

For instance, the National Center for Education Statistics, an arm of the U.S. Department of Education, reports that the for-profit University of Phoenix enrolls more than 165,000 students online across the country. But critics point out that the school uses part-time instructors who work in the fields they teach, not tenured faculty or professional scholars.

Michael Kaley, the University of Phoenix's vice president for Illinois campuses, says that teachers go through a five-week training course, and all have at least a master's degree. He adds the pool of instructors fits the school's older, professional students, who prefer instructors with real-world experience.

"These are mostly people who would not normally go to school. It's good we get access for as many people as possible."

The school prides itself on helping students earn online degrees quickly, but federal statistics suggest many don't earn their degrees within five or six years. The school's graduation rate for its online-only campus is 1 percent over four years and 6 percent over a six-year period.

That falls below the 17 percent overall rate at Northeastern Illinois University in Chicago. Northeastern has the lowest graduation rate in the state and enrolls a large number of returning adult students, a population resembling that of the University of Phoenix.

Kaley says the federal numbers only measure part of the University of Phoenix's population. The graduation statistics only account for first-time college students, or about 40 percent of the school's online enrollment. The school reports its own overall graduation rate closer to the national average of 55 percent.

Illinois' answer to the criticism of for-profit schools is to use a model that is an extension of the existing university.

The University of Illinois at Springfield has become a model for other state schools. It uses the same full-time tenured professors and scholars who teach on campus to instruct most online courses. The online-only enrollment is nearly 25 percent of the school's student

population, according to Ray Schroeder, director of the Office of Technology-Enhanced Learning. Almost a third of all students at the school take at least one online class.

A general myth abounds that online courses are easier than a regular class program and that online students are less likely to be good students. Yet Schroeder reports the incoming grade point average for students in the online major program is 3.5 on a scale of 4, well above the average GPA for incoming on-campus students of 3.0.

"It takes a more disciplined student to thrive online," he says.

Like those at the University of Phoenix, most of the UIS students enroll in online courses that relate to their existing careers. The median student age is 34 for undergraduates and 35 for graduate students.

Schroeder says the strength of the UIS online program is that it offers courses already being taught by career professors, as opposed to the approach of most online programs that operate from a distance-education department and use more part-time faculty.

The UIS program also offers courses over 15 to 16 weeks, unlike the more condensed versions often offered by for-profit schools.

To ease the need for class space and parking for commuters, UIS also plans to offer "blended" classes. At least 50 percent of the course is taught online, but students still have regular class time.

"The carbon footprint of a student who commutes is significant," Schroeder says, adding that the school's blended classes will cut student visits to campus in half.

Online classes also may help relieve limited campus space as enrollment grows and capital dollars from the state become more scarce.

Northeastern Illinois University is building its online program based on the UIS model. Located in Chicago, the commuter campus is built vertically to fit within limited space and is a good example of a school that could benefit from putting more courses online, says Anthony Pina, the school's coordinator of learning technologies.

"Technology in education is best used to solve problems. We're a landlocked university," he says.

The school sought state construction funds to develop the last available piece of land on campus — a baseball diamond — to accommodate growth.

"If we want to grow, since we can't build many more buildings, we have to grow virtually," Pina says.

Northeastern plans to start with blended courses that will offer 20 percent of the classes online. Plans also include incorporating a live streaming video that allows students to see the professor's lecture and potentially helps ease them into online learning.

"The delivery system is not the significant factor in learning if the design of the course and the teaching methods are sound," Pina says. "Putting a course online does not turn good instruction into poor instruction."

Pina also suggests that contrary to common perception, the level of interaction between instructors and individual students can be higher in online courses.

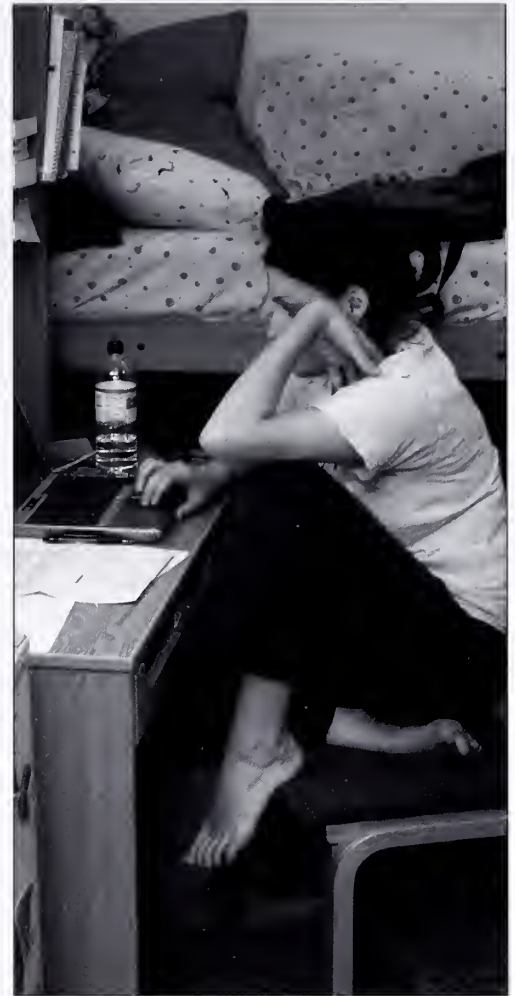
Even with the growth potential for state schools from online programs, they can't mitigate the growing capital needs on most campuses.

State Rep. David Miller, a Lynwood Democrat, says the urgent capital needs of the state can't be addressed simply by putting more classes online. He chairs the House committee that oversees the budget process for higher education.

"Even though the online campus is clearly where the world's education system is going, there's still going to be a need for bricks-and-mortar buildings," he says. "You're still going to need places for students to work on laboratory experiments, and these places need to be up-to-date."

During an Illinois House committee last month, the University of Illinois alone listed hundreds of millions of dollars in deferred maintenance at its campuses, including one academic building that was described as being in "disgraceful" condition.

Lincoln Hall on the Urbana campus is 100 years old and needs an estimated \$60 million in repairs, which cannot be solved by online courses, Miller says. He cites the slow progress of students taking online courses through the University of



Illinois' Global Campus initiative, a \$3 million program based at Urbana-Champaign that has only enrolled 10.

State Rep. Chapin Rose, a Mahomet Republican, says there's still a high demand for the traditional educational experience, particularly among younger students. He says he believes online education can add to the existing pool of students.

"The University of Illinois [at Urbana-Champaign] raised tuition [and fees] to \$20,000, and they're going to fill every seat," he says about the state's largest public institution, near his legislative district. "There's a potential for enormous growth in higher education from this."

Even if online programs aren't yet changing the bottom line for schools, they are already changing the face of education for students around the world.

Sanchez, the UIS student who lives in Guatemala, plans to attend graduation and pick up his diploma in person. It'll be the first time he sets foot on the UIS campus. □

No marks for civility

Nastiness is part of politics, past and present

by Brian J. Gaines and Brianna K. Lawrence

Retiring after seven terms in the U.S. House, Republican Ray LaHood, the 18th District representative from Peoria, explained his departure: “The tone is very negative and disheartening. The decibel level is the highest I’ve heard in politics.”

A decade back, Indiana Democratic U.S. Rep. Lee Hamilton bemoaned the “decline in civility” as he ended a 17-term career. In 1986, Democratic U.S. Rep. Jim Wright of Texas lamented that incoming members of Congress were “not as steeped in the traditions of civility.”

Everyone agrees that the tenor of political debate has plummeted from a

statesman’s age of civil discourse to present-day squabbling. But the timing of this decline is fuzzy.

Political observers concur. Tom Mann and Norm Ornstein, two pundits and Washington, D.C., fixtures, argue that Congress is “broken” and “failing America.” In a multifaceted indictment, they charge that deliberation, discourse and debate are now so deficient that Congress is different in kind from the admirable Congress of old — truly dysfunctional and in desperate need of institutional overhaul.

Their argument was partly anticipated by University of Maryland political

scientist Eric Uslaner in his 1996 book, *The Decline of Civility in Congress*. Civility encompasses politeness and formality but also serious engagement with ideas, and restraint from attacks against individuals and from inference of nefarious motives in opponents. For Uslaner, portents of the decline in civility include few friendships across party lines, changes in debate style and a general lack of a “communitarian” spirit, characterized by norms of reciprocity. He argued that this spirit was lacking not only in Congress but in every sphere of public life. If he is correct, then one should expect to find nasty politics nationwide.

Photograph courtesy of state Senate Republicans



Former state Sen. Rick Winkel of Champaign wrote, “There’s a crisis of leadership in our Capitol on display for the entire world to see.”

Photograph courtesy of state House Democrats



State Rep. Mike Boland of East Moline in floor debate

Springfield seems to fit the bill. Rick Winkel of Champaign, a Republican who served in the Illinois House from 1995 to 2003 and in the Illinois Senate from 2003 to 2007, recently wrote: "There is a crisis of leadership in our state Capitol on display for the entire world to see. The symptoms of the crisis are top leaders publicly feuding and government paralysis. The antidote for this malady is a potent combination of mutual trust, respect and a willingness to negotiate in good faith."

He is not alone; editorial pages have lately been filled with indictments of state leaders and complaints of mismanagement. The litany is familiar. Last year's record-breaking late budget, multiple lawsuits filed by the governor against fellow Democrats and a raft of serious fiscal problems that have not been resolved all stand out as markers of big trouble.

State politics, like national, seem to be broken. One can point the finger of blame at individuals or can broaden the scope to complain of a climate of distrust. Things have never been worse — or have they?

Those unhappy with the rough-and-tumble of modern politics rarely pause to note that politics have always been acrimonious. Lest we forget, Vice President Aaron Burr killed former Treasury Secretary Alexander Hamilton in a duel in 1804. Half a century later, Utah Gov. Brigham Young crowed, "Zachary Taylor is dead and in hell, and I'm glad of it." In 1856, U.S. Rep. Preston Brooks of South Carolina beat U.S. Sen. Matthew Sumner of Massachusetts almost to death with a cane in the Senate chamber, while a colleague held off Sumner's potential defenders at pistol point.

Such actions and rhetoric are, of course, unthinkable today. But perhaps the savage words and deeds of the distant past set too easy a baseline for rejecting modern complaints about incivility as mere moping. Has the post-WWII era been marked by admirable restraint and lofty discourse until a very recent breakdown?

In 1948, Illinois' Republican incumbent Gov. Dwight Green argued that people were tired of "phony emergencies in

which the New Dealers had specialized at Washington and at Springfield. ... The people of America are tired of being lied to about conditions at home and abroad. ... They are tired of the vacillation and appeasement and secret deals which lost the peace our fighters won. They are tired of the socialistic experiments with our national economy which snarled recovery in the crucial days of mounting debt, mounting taxes, and incompetent bureaucracy [sic]."

Green's Democratic opponent, Adlai Stevenson, countered that the GOP in Illinois had "become weak, dishonest, and corrupt in leadership" and that Green was merely "an affable and decorative rubber stamp for the men behind the throne." In 1956, then-presidential candidate Stevenson cautioned that the nation was descending into "a land of slander and scare; the land of sly innuendo, the poison pen, the anonymous phone call and hustling, pushing, shoving; the land of smash and grab and anything to win."

If politicking in the 1950s was really so brutal, when exactly was the golden age? Ornstein and Mann are light on details about how or why things once worked well. They imply that things have fallen apart over their 30-odd years of personal observation, which makes the late 1960s the point of comparison.

In the midst of a very close fight for the Democratic nomination of 2008, does anyone anticipate that the convention in Denver will rival 1968's Chicago convention for incivility? As the Democratic Party imploded, anti-war protesters battled the police, Bill Buckley and Gore Vidal, representing right and left punditry respectively, traded insults — "queer" and "Nazi" — on national television, and inside the hall, Chicago Mayor Richard J. Daley shouted epithets at U.S. Sen. Abraham Ribicoff of Connecticut.

If the 1960s were a tumultuous time, then perhaps by the 1970s politics had settled into an era of restraint and reason. Staying with Illinois, consider the administration of Gov. Dan Walker and his epic battles with the first Mayor Daley, culminating in Walker's fight for renomination in 1976. Both men were Democrats, but Daley, the dominant force in the state party, handpicked Secretary of State Michael Howlett to oust the incumbent. Daley opined, "The ship of state is adrift,

In 1956, then-presidential candidate Stevenson cautioned that the nation was descending into ... "the land of sly innuendo, the poison pen, the anonymous phone call and hustling, pushing, shoving; the land of ... anything to win."

with the captain the cause of our chaos." The subsequent primary, which Howlett won, was called the "dirtiest" in state history. *The Washington Post* reported: "Howlett at varying times referred to Walker as 'an irresponsible son of a bitch,' 'a bum' and 'an old jalopy which spews dirt.' Walker workers reportedly spread rumors that Howlett was terminally ill and had previously suffered a 'secret stroke,' which caused his slight speech impediment." Walker assured supporters, "We're going to whip Boss Daley like he needs to be whipped." The rancor was unmistakable.

A few anecdotes about selective colorful campaigns cannot substitute for systematic evidence, but we would like to suggest that politicians today are, if anything, more — not less — restrained in their public discourse. Indeed, this spring, U.S. Sens. John McCain, Barack Obama and Hillary Clinton have all hurried to distance themselves from advisers or supporters whose gaffes were bland by comparison to the normal rhetoric of the past. Why, then, do so many insiders complain about civility's absence?

First, let's dispense with one plausible candidate. Ultimately, Mann and Ornstein mostly blame national Republicans for not having had the restraint, once they finally captured power, to maintain important norms about minority-party rights. Republicans hadn't controlled the U.S. House for 40 years before the 1994 landslide. The 2000 election produced the first unified Republican U.S. government

in half a century. That account, whatever its merits, won't fly for Illinois.

The current spell of Democratic control in Illinois government does not represent the same kind of return from the wilderness. Yes, the governor's mansion had housed only GOP occupants from 1977 to 2003, but the General Assembly was usually in Democratic hands over those years. And while the very close margins in the U.S. House and U.S. Senate may play a role in keeping party leaders' grips on their whips extra tight, the same is plainly not true in Springfield, where Democratic infighting is severe precisely because there is so little fear that the moribund Republican Party might regain power. At minimum, there are multiple recipes for gridlock.

What is most different about modern political communication is the technology by which messages are conveyed. Hair-raising quotations have been preserved for the ages by historians, but citizens did not always have instant — indeed incessant — access to reporting on the awful things politicians did to and said about one another. A nasty turn of phrase, once uttered, is no longer confined to the annals of a newspaper archive. With more news coverage, viral video, partisan talk radio and easily accessible online articles, someone who previously would have relied on word-of-mouth is now able to witness political barbs repeatedly, long after utterance.

What would cable TV executives give for another Burr-Hamilton duel to boost their ratings? Modern political fights take place in a strange echo chamber. Today's politicians are not unusually mean, but there is so much political discussion that nastiness is always in plain view. Bad money drives out good, and to some extent, bad commentary — loud, superficial, personal and angry — drives out good — carefully reasoned policy analysis.

And does the public love or hate political conflict? Both. There is strong evidence that most people have limited tolerance for conflict, notwithstanding declining civility in other spheres of life. According to University of Nebraska political scientists John Hibbing and Elizabeth Theiss-Morse, the authors of *Congress as Public Enemy*, “a surprising number of people, it seems, dislike being

We are not persuaded that there has ever been a golden age of lofty political debate, be we are also inclined to think that the modern arena is ever noisier. So what?

exposed to processes endemic to democratic government. People profess a devotion to democracy in the abstract but have little or no appreciation for what a practicing democracy invariably brings with it. ... People do not wish to see uncertainty, conflicting opinions, long debate, competing interests, confusion, bargaining, and compromised, imperfect solutions.”

The findings of Hibbing and Theiss-Morse provide half an answer to why the modern world of 24/7 news seems so brutal. The rest of the story is that not everyone dislikes politics and thus wants it to be civil, nonconfrontational and mostly in the background. There is polarization at the elite level, as well as at the sub-elite level, so those most interested in politics are ironically most likely to generate the intense disputes that dishcarten their less-engaged peers. Modern politics contains the seeds of its own public revulsion.

We are not persuaded that there has ever been a golden age of lofty political debate, but we are also inclined to think that the modern arena is ever noisier. So what?

The argument for civility in politics rests on the belief that politicians, though often bitterly divided in their preferences, should restrict their debates to issues and policy while shrugging off any feelings of ill will. The trust that develops permits compromise, restrains self-defeating desires for revenge and facilitates better policymaking. But this desire for polite discourse leads to some puzzling prescriptions. Civility and camaraderie should be widespread but should not segue into cronyism. Candidates for office should not be

immune to negative attacks, but they should refrain from attacking the character of others. They should befriend those with whom they share a political rivalry during the day, but they should hold the same people accountable if they have done something wrong.

It is not clear that this is a realistic vision, and it is also not clear that civility delivers better government or otherwise superior policy outcomes. Exactly what ideals are maximized by civil discourse is not often spelled out. Politics is ultimately about decisions, and it is far from obvious that collegial debate breeds better decisions. Ultimately, conflicting values produce conflict. If civility and civility lead to efficiency, for example, it must be said that there are strong arguments against efficiency — the founders built in divisions and separations of powers to prevent overly responsive government institutions. Lack of conflict can be a sign of a deeply flawed political order in which cabals in power conspire, away from prying eyes.

Finally, an irony of Congress-watchers and pundits lamenting polarization and the absence of bipartisanship — as foils for civility and civility — is that political scientists used to long for stronger parties. In 1950, the American Political Science Association issued a report calling for more “responsible” parties whose members were more cohesive in support of distinct platforms. There are obvious problems with weak political parties, including the absence of crisp choices for voters. There are also obvious problems with strong parties. Lately, bipartisanship is treated as a lofty goal that is sadly neglected. Not long ago, it was more of a bogeyman, synonymous with corruption and symptomatic of meaningless competition.

For those who find modern politics dismaying, we have little comfort to offer. If debate seems to lack civility, things are probably not as different from the past as one might think. But there is also no reason to expect a coming age of harmonious unity. □

Brian J. Gaines is an associate professor of political science at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and the U of I's Institute of Government and Public Affairs. Brianna K. Lawrence is a doctoral student in political science at UIUC.

Hard science

As researchers push for better superaccelerators, Congress applies the brakes

by Daniel C. Vock

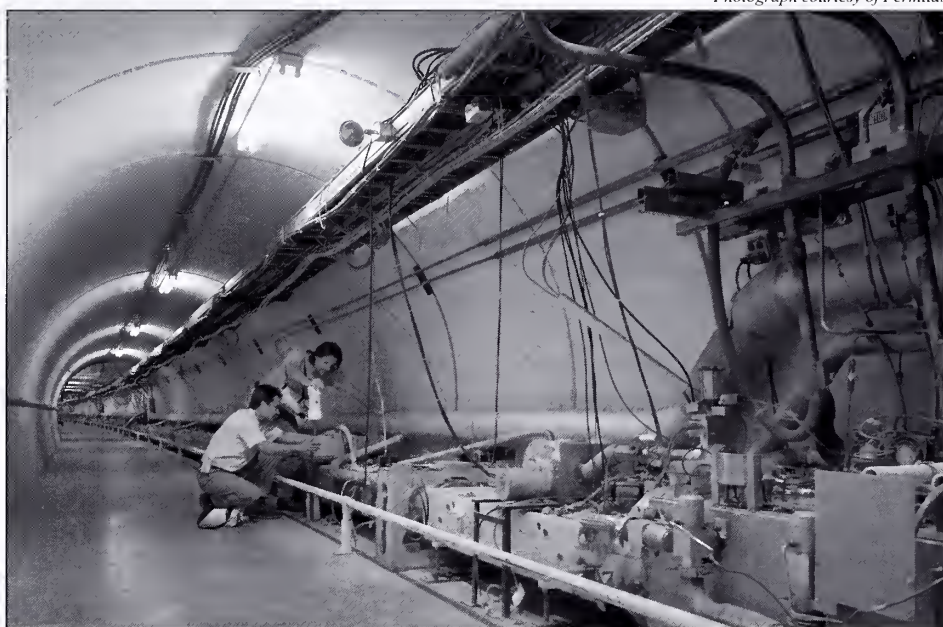
When Robert Roser describes the atmosphere at his job in Batavia, he says his colleagues are “on-edge and nervous.” They are, after all, grappling with an all-too-familiar litany of bad economic news: imminent layoffs, mandatory furloughs, lost jobs to overseas competitors and once-promising future projects on the chopping block.

But Roser isn’t a steelworker or an employee on an auto assembly line. He’s a scientist at Fermilab, the nation’s premiere site for particle physics research. It is, in fact, the best place in the world for scientists to study the building blocks of the universe under conditions that mimic the immediate aftermath of the Big Bang.

Federal funding cuts of \$52 million for the current fiscal year, which ends in September, threaten productivity at Fermilab now and could undercut its future viability. Meanwhile, Argonne National Laboratory in Lemont, where scientists study everything from nanotechnology to transportation, is coping with its own drastic cutbacks.

The sudden funding reductions are the result of a showdown last year between President George W. Bush and the Democratic-controlled Congress — both of which publicly have backed dramatically increasing spending on scientific research.

Scientific and business leaders worry that the cuts jeopardize not only the local economy but also the ability of the United States to attract scientific talent and develop new technologies in the face of stiff international competition.



Photograph courtesy of Fermilab

A section of Tevatron in the main ring tunnel at Fermilab

“Is what happened a statement about long-term research in particle physics? Or is it a statement of Congress trying to be practical and trying to survive one year?” wonders Roser, the Fermilab scientist. “Depending on how you answer, you change the equation dramatically.”

The cuts came as a shock to the scientific community, especially because there’s been so much talk in Washington, D.C., lately about the need to support scientific research and education.

Indeed, national laboratories seldom face layoffs because of budget disputes, and Congress rarely specifies which big-ticket items should be cut, says Kei Koizumi, who tracks federal spending on research

and development for the American Association for the Advancement of Science.

The funding dispute has “become somewhat symbolic of the federal government actually keeping its policy commitment with actual dollars,” Koizumi says.

In August, the president signed the America Competes Act, a law passed with bipartisan support designed to boost the country’s ability to teach students math and science and to compete in technology-heavy industries.

In fact, it looked as if there was bipartisan agreement to invest money in researching science. President Bush



The main control room of Fermilab's accelerator complex

asked Congress to boost funding for the Department of Energy's Office of Science, which oversees both Fermilab and Argonne, by \$600 million. The U.S. House and a key panel of the Senate approved an even bigger increase of \$700 million.

Congress added spending in other areas, too, so Bush balked at the cost of the total package and threatened a veto. In December, lawmakers relented and sent the president a budget that met his spending limits. To do so, they cut physical sciences so they could afford more spending on renewable energy and health.

Argonne's \$530 million budget was cut by \$20 million; while Fermilab's \$350 million budget was sliced by \$25 million.

The Illinois labs were especially hard-hit, but the cuts also led to layoffs at a Stanford University particle accelerator in California and completely eliminated the United States' share of funding this year for an international fusion project.

To many, the cuts endanger the United States' role as the world's scientific leader.

"We're already losing out to other countries," says U.S. Rep. Judy Biggert, a Republican who represents the district where Argonne is located.

"We've always thought that the thing that keeps us above other countries is our creativity and innovation. What's happening is other countries are funding their scientists and their research, and they're moving up. We're losing our competitive way," she adds.

That's especially true at Fermilab. Its groundbreaking research will soon be eclipsed by a European effort. This year's

cuts could diminish the prospect of Fermilab once again becoming the world's top research site for particle physics.

At the Batavia lab, scientists speed up protons and anti-protons, using a series of accelerators, until the particles are traveling through a four-mile loop called the Tevatron in temperatures close to absolute zero and speeds approaching the speed of light.

When the protons crash into anti-protons, the debris is spectacular.

Hundreds of particles can result — some gone in an instant, some nearly impossible to detect. Some of those notoriously elusive types, such as the top quark, bottom quark and the tau neutrino, were first detected at Fermilab.

There's only one missing piece of the subatomic map predicted by the Standard Model Theory, the blueprint physicists use to describe fundamental particles and how they interact. Discovering the last particle — called the Higgs boson — would be a major coup for Fermilab, and its properties could help researchers determine why matter has mass. Already, experiments at Fermilab have narrowed the range of places to look for the Higgs boson, and Tevatron is operating better than ever as researchers race to find it.

But there's not much time left for the 20-year-old Tevatron. Researchers at the Batavia facility are under the gun because the new European collider begins operations this summer. The Large Hadron Collider is seven times more powerful than the Tevatron and will make

the Fermilab machine obsolete in a few years.

That means the host laboratory, CERN, which straddles the border between France and Switzerland near Geneva, will become the world's top research site for particle physics.

"It's a new experience for us," admitted Raymond Orbach, the undersecretary for science at the U.S. Department of Energy, to a congressional panel in March.

"We've always had the biggest machines here in the United States. And we would welcome people from around the world to come and use them. And their intellect and their contributions have added to our own and given us tremendous advantages," he said.

To regain its edge, Fermilab hoped to spend about \$60 million in the current fiscal year on research and development for the International Linear Collider, the next-generation machine designed to outperform the new collider at CERN.

But when Congress reworked the Department of Energy's budget, it slashed that planning money to a quarter of the original amount. By that time, Fermilab already had spent all the money it was set to receive, so now preparations for the new collider are on hold.

Two other major Fermilab initiatives were gutted this year, too. Project X, which was first proposed last year, is seen as a stepping stone for building the International Linear Collider. A separate effort, called NOvA, is the next phase of an experiment that involves shooting charge-free particles called neutrinos more

than 800 miles to a Minnesota site on the Canadian border.

"This one funding cut basically took away the short-term, the medium-term and the long-term future of the laboratory and calls into question whether Congress supports the existence of Fermilab," says U.S. Rep. Bill Foster, a former Fermilab scientist whose district includes the facility. Foster, a Democrat, took office by winning a special election after Congress passed the cuts.

The hits to the labs could take a toll on the local economy, as well.

The area would lose at least \$56 million a year because of layoffs and reduced spending at the labs, according to a study conducted for Choose DuPage, an organization that encourages businesses to locate in DuPage County.

And the loss could be twice as much, argues Roger Hopkins, the group's president and CEO, because spending at the public labs benefits the surrounding communities far more than spending by private enterprises.

Plans are under way at Fermilab to lay off 200 of the facility's 1,960 employees. Everyone, from the president to the janitors, has had to take unpaid furlough days once every two months in another cost-saving move. The furloughs make it more difficult to run experiments because the tests often depend on the expertise of several employees who all must be on hand to carry out the trials.

The work at Fermilab attracts scientists from around the world to the Chicago region, either to visit or to live.

For example, the team that Roser, the Fermilab scientist, works for includes about 630 people, but only about a third of them are actually on-site. In fact, only 60 of them work directly for the lab. The rest collect their paychecks from one of 63 institutions, primarily research universities, while working on the Collider Detector at Fermilab experiment.

Scaling back the work at Fermilab could impact physicists, computer scientists and engineers throughout the country who work on the site's projects, Roser notes.

At Argonne, the cuts mean that fewer outside scientists from private industry or universities will be able to use the lab's high-tech tools, including the Advanced Photon Source. Researchers from Abbott Laboratories used the X-rays generated by

the machine to help develop Kaletra, a commonly prescribed medicine to combat AIDS.

The lab is also shutting down the Intense Pulse Neutron Source, a popular tool for developing plastics, and laying off the employees who worked on it.

Jerry Roper, president and CEO of the Chicagoland Chamber of Commerce, says local businesses often take for granted their access to some of the top facilities and smartest scientific minds in their own backyard.

"You can imagine that someone who's sitting in Minneapolis, North Dakota or South Carolina doesn't have that advantage," Roper says. "We have a tremendous advantage."

Reversing the cuts will be tricky. Three different pieces of legislation on Capitol Hill could come into play to change course.

First, lab supporters would have to persuade lawmakers to include new money for the labs in a supplemental budget bill intended to fund the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. The problem is that the White House wants to avoid adding nonmilitary spending to the bill because it wants to avoid opening the floodgates for more domestic spending.

Second, a temporary budget could well emerge if Congress and President Bush use the same brinkmanship over spending as they did last year. Democrats have little incentive to bargain with Bush because they hope a Democrat will occupy the

White House in January. Likewise, the president could use his veto power to trump any major increases that Congress approves. The result could easily be a temporary budgetary patch, called a continuing resolution, that keeps government running but adds few new initiatives.

Finally, the permanent budget for next fiscal year, which starts October 1, would have to include more money for Fermilab and Argonne, too. Bush already supported an increase for the labs in the budget proposal he sent to Congress in February, but that's no guarantee Congress will follow his suggestions. In fact, Bush asked for more money — not less — for the national laboratories during the current year, only to have that outlay slashed behind closed doors by congressional leaders.

Members of the Illinois congressional delegation say they'll make restoring the cuts a priority. The freshman Foster, Biggert, and Democratic U.S. Sens. Dick Durbin and Barack Obama have all pushed the issue publicly.

Biggert, the congresswoman from Hinsdale, stresses the need for quick action.

"The problem is that if we don't have the funding now, we lose the scientists, and programs are dropped," she says. "You just don't come by a lot of these great scientists without a lot of work." □

Daniel C. Vock, a frequent contributor to Illinois Issues, is a reporter for the Washington, D.C.-based Stateline.org.



Photograph courtesy of Fermilab

An aerial view of Fermilab in Batavia, which shows the accelerator ring

Big people on campus



Samuel Goldman

After more than a year of administrative transitions, Southern Illinois University Carbondale has another new interim chancellor: retired professor and former university trustee **Samuel Goldman**.

Goldman has served in various teaching and administrative roles for the university for 28 years.

He replaces **Fernando Treviño**, whom SIU President **Glenn Poshard** placed on administrative leave in mid-March after hearing "serious concerns" about his job performance from campus and community officials. He was reassigned to a tenured faculty position pending arbitration.

Interim provost **Don Rice** handled administrative duties until Goldman's appointment last month. The string of administrative changes started in November 2006 when Poshard chose not to renew **Walter Wendler's** contract as chancellor. Former provost **John Dunn** filled in as interim chancellor but then left to become president of Western Michigan University in Kalamazoo. At the same time, Poshard selected Treviño as permanent chancellor of the flagship campus. He started in July 2007 (see *Illinois Issues*, July/August 2007, page 36), but concerns about his job performance arose.

Treviño, a Texas native, has an extensive background in health administration, previously serving as dean of the School of Public Health and professor of health management and policy at the University of North Texas in Fort Worth.

Juvenile justice schools gain a new leader

Lanée Walls now oversees the education curriculum for more than 1,200 youth housed in juvenile justice facilities across the state. She replaces **Roger Williams**, who retired after serving as acting superintendent when the Illinois Department of Juvenile Justice separated from the Department of Corrections.

Juvenile Justice Director Kurt Friedenauer appointed Walls superintendent of School District 428, which includes eight schools in juvenile correction centers. Students can earn their eighth-grade diplomas, high-school diplomas, general educational development certificates or college vocational certificates through the schools.

Walls was employed by Chicago Heights' School District 170 for 10 years, working her way up to become principal of Wilson School in 2004. She also worked as a school psychologist for the Illinois Department of Corrections from 1995 to 1998.

She earned her doctorate in education from Loyola University Chicago and her master's degree in educational administration from Governors State University in University Park. She also holds master's and bachelor's degrees in psychology from Eastern Illinois University in Charleston.

Longtime policy analyst will retire

Mike Lawrence, director of the Paul Simon Public Policy Institute at Southern Illinois University Carbondale, will retire in November. But his name will reappear in bylines of political commentaries after a brief hiatus.

Lawrence, who continues to serve as vice chair of the Illinois Issues Advisory Board, spent about 25 years in journalism. He says he started writing for his hometown newspaper in Galesburg at age 14, unpaid. He later covered state government and politics, including 20 years with Lee Enterprises and one year as Statehouse bureau chief for the *Chicago Sun-Times*.

Lawrence then spent 10 years with the administration of then-Gov. Jim Edgar as press secretary and senior adviser.

He joined the institute in 1994 as associate director and became director in 2004. He says he would have stayed longer but felt the timing was right to retire, given that the institute's nearly \$10 million endowment exceeds the goal established by the founder, late U.S. Sen. Paul Simon, and because he feels confident in the institute's ability to find a replacement. He adds that he wanted to return to writing political commentaries, which he stopped after being pressured to do so in the interest of the institute and the university.

He says he leaves with a high level of enthusiasm. Having served the institute under seven different chancellors in 11 years, he says those changes didn't significantly affect the institute's ability to become known for its work.

Energy expert helps form a national Smart Grid

Illinois Commerce Commissioner **Sherman Elliott** will serve on a national committee to study and implement new technologies designed to strengthen the reliability and efficiency of the national electricity grid.

The Springfield resident was appointed to the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners' Smart Grid Collaborative with 15 other

commissioners from across the country. They start meeting in July.

Elliott began his four-year appointment to the Illinois Commerce Commission late last year. The five-member panel regulates public utilities.

He previously was manager of state regulatory affairs for the Midwest Independent Transmission System Operator, where he monitored state and federal regulatory filings and worked

with communities that received electricity from the transmission system. During the previous eight years, he served as senior energy policy adviser to the commission on state and federal issues. He also served as a senior economist in the Public Utilities Division.

Elliott earned bachelor's and master's degrees in economics from the University of Illinois at Springfield.

Shifts at the top

Janet Grimes switches from executive director of the state's Capital Development Board to head of the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency. She now oversees coordination of events for next year's



Janet Grimes

Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial celebration.

"I've been looking at this agency with my nose pressed against the window, so to speak, for many, many years and was recruited," she says.

Jim Riemer Sr. of Springfield

replaces Grimes as executive director of the Capital Development Board, which manages construction projects of state buildings, public schools and universities, as well as



Jim Riemer Sr.

repair projects of more than 8,400 state-owned properties.

Grimes served with the construction agency since 1999 and led Gov. Rod Blagojevich's economic development program called Opportunity Returns and had a hand in the construction of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum in Springfield.

But she leaves the construction board at a time she says the state is in "desperate need" of a statewide capital

plan. Last year, the board responded to 100 emergency projects, excluding higher education's emergency needs.

"Capital Development Board basically has been sticking their fingers in the holes and dikes concerning those buildings," she says, citing roofs, boilers and other safety concerns in veterans homes, mental health institutes and correctional centers. "There are some real health-safety issues, as well as a waste, if you have a leaking roof, and then you're not only needing to repair it in a hurry, which is not the most cost-effective way to do it, but you may have a moldy carpet and drywall and other damage that's done."

But she says the timing was right for her move to the Historic Preservation Agency. The Chatham resident says she always had a passion for libraries, museums, educational, cultural and historic issues, and she describes her new job as an "opportunity of a lifetime" to help children and adults rediscover Lincoln.

Grimes previously managed marketing campaigns, including organ donor awareness efforts, for the secretary of state's office. She earned communications degrees from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and from what now is the University of Illinois at Springfield.

Appointed by the agency's board of directors, she replaces **Jennifer Tirey**, who returns to her position as deputy director at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum.

Riemer, appointed by Blagojevich, joined the Capital Development Board as a project manager in 1987. He served as deputy director of the Construction Administration Division in 2003 and coordinated labor and management issues with the state's 21 Building and Construction Trades Councils. He spent the previous 15 years as a journeyman ironworker.

He earned a labor studies degree from what now is the University of Illinois at Springfield. He also received the Purple Heart after being wounded in Vietnam.

Powerful agency

Gov. Rod Blagojevich appointed the first executive director of the state agency created amid controversy last year to protect Illinoisans from increasing power costs.

Mark Pruitt leads the new Illinois Power Agency, designed to build a stable source of power for the state. The agency has authority to eventually build power plants, directly competing with private electricity providers in buying the cheapest power possible for all customers.

The agency also can purchase electricity and distribute it to residents and businesses. It will purchase power on the market and sell it to the two largest electric utilities in the state, Commonwealth Edison in northern Illinois and Ameren Illinois downstate.

The agency was created as part of last year's electricity rate debate, rooted in an expired state law that froze electricity rates for nearly 10 years. The expiration led the state to create a new way to buy electricity through a type of auction, which caused rates to increase as much as 300 percent for some customers. After more than a year of legislative debate, lawmakers required the utilities and their parent companies to give rebates to customers, particularly those with all-electric heating systems.

Pruitt comes from the University of Illinois at Chicago, where he worked on securing electrical power for state agencies and local governments. With a background in energy management, he has a master's degree from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

The Senate must confirm his appointment.

CORRECTION

The March issue (page 34) incorrectly described former Sen. Adeline Geo-Karis as the longest-serving member of the Illinois Senate. That honor belongs to Sen. Richard J. Barr of Joliet, who represented the 41st District from 1903 to 1951.

For updated news see the *Illinois Issues* Web site at <http://illinoisissues.uis.edu>



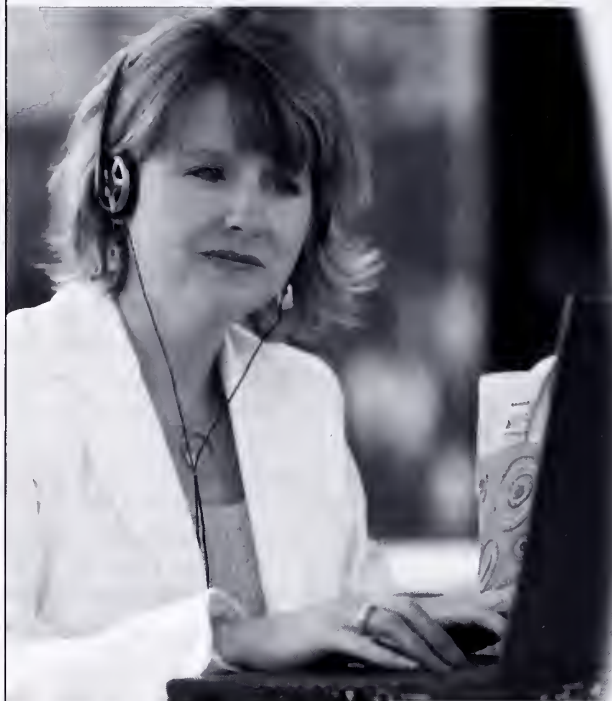
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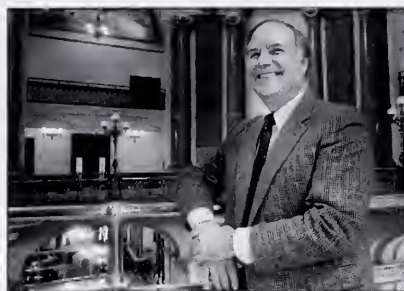
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Charles N. Wheeler III



Should the Constitution be amended to account for a governor who is viewed unfavorably?

by Charles N. Wheeler III

Take a deep breath and count to 10. Illinoisans would do well to keep that axiom in mind as they ponder whether the state Constitution should be changed to allow disgruntled voters to oust elected officials.

Sparked by widespread dissatisfaction with Gov. Rod Blagojevich, a proposal to add recall powers to the Constitution is under consideration in the General Assembly.

Under its provisions, voters could fire a governor, other statewide elected officials or legislators after they've served six months in office. Triggering a recall election for a constitutional officer would require petition signatures equal to at least 12 percent of the total votes cast for the office the targeted official won. For legislators, signatures of at least 20 percent of votes cast would be needed. If a petition has enough valid signatures, voters would be asked whether the official should be removed — and if so, who should replace him or her — during a special election set by the State Board of Elections.

Those pushing for recall powers make no bones about their immediate motivation: dumping Blagojevich as soon as possible. If not for the governor's "dismal performance," said its sponsor, Rep. Jack D. Franks, a Democrat from Woodstock, "I would not have filed" the proposed amendment.

But — here comes the deep breath — should the Constitution be amended just because the current governor is seen in some quarters as incompetent at best, corrupt at worst? Once added to the basic charter, the recall power would outlast Blagojevich and could have undesirable consequences.

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Consider, for example, a future governor who's considering confronting forthrightly the state's fiscal problems by proposing a general tax increase, or by making massive spending cuts. Either choice might be sound public policy but

not politically popular. While 12 percent of the electorate — about 416,000 signatures based on the 2006 election — is a significant number, determined and well-funded opponents might have little trouble garnering enough support for a recall vote. Faced with that prospect, might the governor instead opt for more smoke-and-mirrors budgeting?

In the case of the General Assembly, a powerful special interest group could go after a lawmaker who opposes its agenda, using its member network and bankroll to gather the required signatures, which could be fewer than 2,500 in some House districts, based on 2006 results.

Clearly, one might argue, governors and legislators don't need any more incentive to avoid controversial stands or dodge courageous votes — doing what's right as opposed to what's politically expedient — than they already have.

Moreover, recall would offer a tempting second chance for losing candidates in close legislative races. A runner-up with 49 percent of the vote would need signatures from fewer than half of them to force a recall, adding a new meaning to "target district."

Of course a recall threat might be less intimidating if those seeking to oust an official needed to allege official misconduct, failure to perform required duties or some similar grounds, as is the case in seven of the 18 states that permit

recall of executive and legislative officials. But the current proposal has no such requirement; a recall petition could be started if someone didn't like the way the governor blow-dries his hair or the cut of the attorney general's pantsuit, noted House Majority Leader Barbara Flynn Currie, a Chicago Democrat.

And a recall vote would be an unwelcome expense for local election officials, who would have to cover its multimillion-dollar cost.

In addition to such policy questions, timing issues seem to undermine the effort to promote recall as a way to rid the state of Blagojevich. Were voters to add recall to the Constitution in November, those wanting to oust the governor would have to file notice with the elections board before starting to collect signatures, with a 160-day window to amass enough. Once the signatures are filed, the board has 105 days to certify the petition and schedule the recall election within the next 100 days. Given those deadlines, it's quite likely the filing period for the 2010 election would start before a recall

election would be held. In fact, it's possible the recall election would be so late that the governor already might have lost the February primary, should he choose to seek a third term.

While adding recall to the Constitution might be too high a price to pay to bounce Blagojevich a few months early, Franks and others dissatisfied with the governor have a better option available, one already on the books.

Under Section 14 of the Legislative Article, the House may impeach a governor, or any other executive or judicial officer, by a majority vote of those elected, or 60 of the 118. The provision authorizes the House to investigate whether a cause for impeachment exists but does not spell out grounds. If an official is impeached by the House, the Senate tries the case and can remove the official by a two-thirds vote, or 40 of the 59 senators.

Impeachment proceedings are extremely rare in Illinois, according to the legislature's chief research agency. In fact, only one judge has been impeached,

back in 1833, and the Senate acquitted. More recently, in 1997, a House investigative panel considered whether then-Supreme Court Chief Justice James D. Heiple should be impeached for misconduct relating to traffic violations but decided his transgressions didn't warrant ouster.

If Blagojevich's critics believe his performance merits dismissal, the better route than recall would be to initiate impeachment proceedings. A bipartisan House committee could investigate the allegations in a thorough, deliberate manner and present its findings without the circus atmosphere and political ads likely to accompany a recall campaign.

Should the House choose not to impeach, or the Senate not to convict, voters always can express their dissatisfaction the old-fashioned way: at the polls in the next election, the time-tested method to dump public officials who've lost favor. □

Charles N. Wheeler III is director of the Public Affairs Reporting program at the University of Illinois at Springfield.



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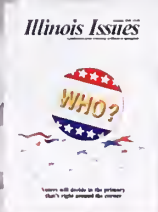
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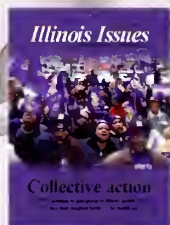
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